

**LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION
CAMBRIDGE CITY & SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**MATTER 6
GREEN BELT**

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**ON BEHALF OF
PIGEON LAND AND LANDS IMPROVEMENT HOLDINGS**



M6/5102 M6/20801

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Executive summary

The Green Belt review of 2012 is an unreliable guide to the value of the Green Belt. It has led to flawed conclusions about how to meet the needs of the City. Those needs are for sustainable housing and employment land, in particular the co-location of R&D within/on the edge of the City.

Allocating land on the edge of Cambridge will provide:

- the R&D sector in particular with what the land the market needs and will soon run out of, preventing real damage to what makes Cambridge of regional, national and international importance; and

- it would prevent an unsustainable centrifugal development pattern which is at odds with the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development.

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1 Response to Matters

- 1.1 The following statement is prepared on behalf of Pigeon Land and Lands Improvement Holdings. It should be read in conjunction with previously submitted representations (CCC 5102/SCD 20801).

Matter 6 (i)

Does the level of need for new jobs and homes (paragraph 2.54 of CCC LP and paragraph 2.32 SCDC LP) constitute the exceptional circumstances necessary to justify the proposed removal of sites from the Green Belt (para 83 of the Framework and paragraphs 044 and 045 of Planning Practice Guidance).

- 1.2 Both Cambridge City Council (CCC) and South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) accept the level of need for homes is such that this constitutes the exceptional circumstances for the release of Green Belt. This led to the review of the Green Belt and the allocation of sites. Paragraph 2.54 CCC Local Plan and 2.32 SCDC Local Plan both make it clear that given the need for homes and jobs the exceptional circumstances exist to justify release.

- 1.3 The need for housing and employment are just raw need figures and should be considered alongside:

The vital importance of supporting Cambridge as an international R&D centre. Cambridge's R&D/academic role is a key driver in the national and regional economy (our representation Matter 3, Matter 4);

Delivery. The timing of the release of land coming forward for R&D is vital. If development is pushed towards the new settlement option, considerable infrastructure will be required. Not only is this costly, the funding mechanism is not in place. Delivery will be relegated to later in the plan period (our presentation Matters 2, 4);

Need. International high-tech companies and R&D need to cluster in the City. Papworth Hospital has recently announced its relocation to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and the recent decision of Astra Zeneca to relocate its HQ to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus illustrate the benefits perceived by these companies to clusters. R&D works by co-location and will go off the boil or succumb to competition potentially abroad unless it is facilitated and guaranteed (our representation Matter 4). Without Green Belt release there will not be enough land to meet these needs;

Places of work need appropriately skilled workers, preferably close to their work place (our presentation Matters 2, 3 and 4);

The new settlement strategy has considerable negative implications on environmental, social and economic effects due to enforced commuting to places of work in Cambridge;

The Joint Planning Unit document (RD/STRAT/040) concludes that development on the edge of Cambridge is the most sustainable option;

SCDC in their Sustainability Appraisal (SCDC Initial Sustainability Appraisal report July 2012) concludes that development on the edge of Cambridge is the most sustainable option; and

Climate change is considered by the European Commission to be amongst the key environmental challenges (Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment). Climate change is exacerbated by burning fuel and

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production of CO₂— a result of commuting (our representation Matter 5). People need to be given realistic opportunities to choose sustainable travel modes for their journey to work.

- 1.4 These additional factors add significant weight to the exceptional circumstances required to justify Green Belt release.

Bearing in mind the Framework's indication that development in the Green Belt should be resisted, what would be the consequences if the boundary of the GB were to be retained in its current location?

- 1.5 The Councils claim that they are rolling out the development strategy established through the RPG 6 and 2003 Structure Plan. This is not the case (Appendix 1). The 1999-2016 Structure Plan 2003 Policy 9/1 expected to deliver 52% on Cambridge fringe sites and 48% on new settlements. The new allocations proposed in the current Plans expect to deliver 10% on the edge of Cambridge, 75% in new settlements and 15% in the villages. The Councils' proposed development strategy based on new settlements beyond the Green Belt reverts to a dispersed pattern.

- 1.6 It is relevant to consider the likely implications of the dispersed pattern of growth the Councils now espouse and the consequences if the boundary of the GB were to be retained in its current location.

- 1.7 The document 'Cambridge Green Belt: Towards 2016 1999' (Appendix 2) was submitted by CCC as evidence to the examination of RPG6. This document outlined the problems of a dispersed pattern of growth as:

reliance on the car for journeys (the 52.9% of people with a job in Cambridge but who lived outside Cambridge in 1991);

the effect on four major employers, Cambridgeshire County Council, Science Park, Marshalls and Addenbrookes with most employees working at least 11km from their home;

traffic congestion, noise, pollution and accidents between vehicles and cyclists, particularly at peak times;

the high house prices due to the tightly drawn Green Belt;

middle income families having little option but to live away from Cambridge, further away from their point of employment and from services and leisure facilities, so increasing journey distances and decreasing transport mode options; and

severe congestion along all City radial routes extending back to many of the surrounding villages with the result that the environmental amenity of the City is damaged.

- 1.8 The problems set out in 1999 are still relevant, and have grown worse.

- 1.9 Development on the edge of Cambridge should be seen in the context of the national and regional economy (our submission Matter 4); the need to co-locate high tech and R&D close to Cambridge and provide for workers to live nearby so that they have realistic opportunity to choose sustainable travel modes for their journey to work; and the adverse environmental, social and economic effects of not allowing development close to Cambridge. Additional development should be allowed on the edge of Cambridge.

- 1.10 In addition, if the Green Belt is not relaxed, the continued demand for Cambridge-centric growth will mean increasing pressure within Cambridge and the immediate setting of the historic core.

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Matter 6 (ii)

Does the 2012 Inner Green Belt Study provide a robust justification for the proposed boundary changes? If not why not? (Where issues relating to the methodology used to undertake the study are in dispute, the Inspector encourages representors and the Councils to prepare Statements of Common Ground to identify areas of agreement and dispute).

1.11 The 2012 Inner Green Belt Study is flawed and not robust. Not all land which could be released without harming the objectives of Green Belt policy when seen in the context of the NPPF as a whole is identified.

1.12 We have set out our concerns about RD/STRAT/210 in our previous representations (Sept 2013) particularly paragraphs 4.27- 4.40) which are outlined here:

Large parcels of land used so results are negatively skewed

1.13 Take for example, Sector 8 Area 1. The area that this covers is very large. There are elements of Very High importance to the Green Belt within this parcel, but that this is confined to the River Corridor (Ref RD/STRAT/190 Landscape Character Assessment – defining character). This value is not relevant to the majority of the site which has considerably lesser importance and land which could be released from the Green Belt is not identified.

Significance of Green Belt is not accounted for as described in the methodology

1.14 RD/STRAT/210 on page 5 describes how the 'Importance to Green Belt' is an "overall judgement.....made from the base data and the assessments of importance to setting, character and separation" which follows the methodology set out in RD/STRAT/170.

1.15 The table below demonstrates the errors in assessing importance.

	Importance to Setting according to RD/STRAT/210	Importance to Character according to RD/STRAT/210	Importance to Separation according to RD/STRAT/210	Importance to Green Belt according to RD/STRAT/210	Importance to Green Belt – assessment based on methodology
SECTOR 8.1	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	VERY HIGH	The value according to the methodology is HIGH. The importance has been overemphasised.
SECTOR 8.2	LOW	LOW	NEGLIGIBLE	MEDIUM	The value according to the methodology is LOW. The importance has been overemphasised.
SECTOR 8.3	NEGLIGIBLE	NEGLIGIBLE	NEGLIGIBLE	MEDIUM	The value according to the methodology is NEGLIGIBLE. The importance has been overemphasised.
SECTOR 8.4	LOW	LOW	NEGLIGIBLE	MEDIUM	The value according to the methodology is LOW.

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					The importance has been overemphasised.
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In every single case, the value place on importance to Green Belt for the areas which make up Sector 8 in the Councils' own assessment are wrong.

Discrepancy accounting for different areas.

- 1.16 The proposed allocations of GB1, GB2, GB3 and 4 (Sector 11 Area 1 and 4, and Sector 12 Area 1 and Area 2), the importance to the Green Belt is MEDIUM. Both Councils state that these are small areas not considered of long term importance to Green Belt purposes.
- 1.17 The Councils find that Sector 8, Areas 2, 3 and 4 have the MEDIUM importance to the Green Belt. RD/STRAT/210 states that “a sensitivity score of medium/low/negligible indicated that any change to the Green Belt boundary would have limited an sic effect on Green Belt purposes”. However Sector 8, Areas 2,3 and 4 have not been proposed for allocation although the NPPF para 85 second bullet is clear that Green Belt should not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open.
- 1.18 The Inner Green Belt study is internally inconsistent, flawed and unreliable. It should not be used to make decisions on importance to the purpose of the Green Belt.

Matter 6 (iii)

Does the Inner Green Belt Review take account of the requirements of paras 84 and 85 of the Framework, notably the need to take account of sustainable patterns of development; to ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development; and that the boundary will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period.

- 1.19 We consider that the Review does not take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development.
- 1.20 RD/STRAT/210 draws on the 2002 Inner Green Belt Study (RD/STRAT/170) and the Appraisal of the Inner Green Belt boundary undertaken by CCC in May 2012 (RD/STRAT/200).
- 1.21 I am the person who undertook RD/STRAT/170 and RD/STRAT/190 when I worked for Cambridge City Council. That 2002 Boundary Study was undertaken in the context of RPG6, the 2003 Structure Plan and the policy requirement to “take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development”. Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts para 2.10.
- 1.22 Paragraph 3.4 of RD/STRAT/210 states that “conclusions from the broad appraisal in May 2012 are brought forward and underpin this review”. The 2012 Appraisal of the Inner Green Belt (RD/STRAT/200) states “the appraisal specifically reconsidered zones of land immediately adjacent to the City in terms of the principles and function of the Green Belt”. There is no reference to considering the need to promote sustainable patterns of development as required by NPPF 84.
- 1.23 RD/STRAT/210 is a Green Belt exercise undertaken without any balance of considering the other sustainability issues. The Pro Forma site assessment undertaken at the Issues and Options 2 stage does not satisfy the requirement of NPPF 84 because the Green Belt weight is wrongly ascribed due to the flaws in RD/STRAT/210 and sites were rejected on Green Belt issues.

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- 1.24 RD/STRAT/210 states at paragraph 3.5 *“areas with a lesser importance to the Green Belt surrounding Cambridge are very limited and should be considered bearing in mind the value that is put on the City in its setting”*. The Issues and Options 2: Part 1 paragraph 7.14 finds that *“as a consequence of the releases....the adjacent rural land surrounding these sites does now have increased value for Green Belt purposes and to the setting of the city”*.
- 1.25 This is a clear indication that the Councils have judged the value of the Green Belt as even more important but without any balance of the other environmental issues, such as the pressure to tackle climate change, the excessive use of fossil fuels, the requirement to achieve more sustainable travel modes and patterns which are increasingly pressing problems, economic and social issues. These other sustainability issues have been set to one side.
- 1.26 RD/STRAT/210 has not been undertaken in accordance with para 84 of the NPPF. The Study is flawed, the review has not undertaken positively.
- 1.27 A robust Green Belt Study in compliance with the NPPF 84 is required to ensure that where land is considered not to be of long term importance to the Green Belt it should be released (NPPF para 85 second bullet).
- 1.28 The NPPF 85 requires that local authorities should :
- “Ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development”*.
- 1.29 Both local authorities have outlined their sustainable objectives in achieving the Plan and claim to be rolling out the most sustainable pattern of growth based on the most sustainable hierarchy of locations. Both authorities have restricted Green Belt development founded on a document which has not been positively prepared and which contains a flawed methodology.
- “Not include land which it is unnecessary to keep open.”*
- 1.30 This relates to the forward planning of Cambridge to ensure that long term development can be accommodated. Where land does not perform a significant function to the purpose of the Green Belt it should not be retained as Green Belt as we have set out.
- “Satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period”*.
- 1.31 Unless the R&D sector is frustrated in its desire to co-locate in Cambridge and the sector stagnates, there should be continued pressure for Cambridge to accommodate R&D employment.
- 1.32 There are economic, social and environmental issues which demand a rebalance of the current long commutes for people employed in Cambridge but who cannot live in Cambridge with more homes in Cambridge so that people can live closer to their places of work and have genuine choice of sustainable travel options.
- 1.33 The most sustainable development hierarchy, with development on the edge of Cambridge following only development within the urban edge, is agreed. There will be continued pressure for Cambridge to grow and with a tightly drawn Green Belt the pressure will be on the historic core and its immediate setting.
- “Define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent”*.

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- 1.34 The proposed allocations (GB1, GB2, GB3, GB4 and GB5) do not have readily recognised physical features upon which the Green Belt boundary can be fixed. These areas are likely to come under pressure for additional release. The Green Belt assessment (RD/STRAT/210) has been undertaken without appropriate reference to smaller areas of land and the boundaries which define them. If carried out correctly, other sites such as Cambridge South could provide the recognisable and likely to be permanent boundaries.

Matter 6 (iv)

Are the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt, set out at paragraph 2.50 (Table 2.4) of CCC LP and paragraph 2.29 of SCDC LP, consistent with paragraph 80 of the Framework.

- 1.35 We challenge the purposes of the Green Belt specified by the local authorities as the word 'compact' appears to have been misused and continues to be open to misinterpretation. In the Local Plans Cambridge is perceived to have somehow reached capacity and that only very restricted growth could happen without the balance being tipped away from a 'compact' City.
- 1.36 'Compact' was used in relation to Cambridge early on. The Dykes Bower review of 1943 stated that one of the main planning aims should be "*the maintenance of the close approach of the country on its west side*".
- 1.37 In the Holford Report 1950 it is mentioned in the context of development being compact rather than sprawling at para 426 "*...an attempt should be made.....to retain the advantages of a medium-sized town and the special advantages of Cambridge, and that future development should be compact rather than sprawling*". Para 275 continues that amongst the qualities of Cambridge most people would want to retain was "*countryside near the town*" and "*short distances between home and work*".
- 1.38 These ideas were taken forward with the publication of '*The Future Shape of Cambridge*' by the City Architect and Planning Officer Gordon Logie in 1966 and in 1974 by Professor J Parry-Lewis with plans of how Cambridge could grow and still retain its connectedness with access to the countryside shown in Appendices 3 and 4 (refer to our submission September 2013 Appendix 2).
- 1.39 The Parry-Lewis study was concerned about taking the pressures off the historic centre and concluded "*Cambridge must grow in order to retain as much of its character as it can*" and that the only way to conserve the historic centre was to have a major expansion around a new centre, the best place for this being to the south.
- 1.40 RD/STRAT/190 does not value compactness as a defining character in its own right. Rather it states "compactness and sense of arrival should therefore be considered in conjunction with other characteristics to make as assessment as to whether the sum total is regarded as Defining Character."
- 1.41 We consider that amongst the essential elements of Cambridge are its 'connectedness' so that areas of Cambridge should be connected and easily accessible, there should be short distances between home and work, industry including health should be co-located to allow synergy and dialogue, and that the countryside should be near the town.
- 1.42 For example, the development of Cambridge South would retain the essence of 'compactness' understood as being important for Cambridge. It would not cause Cambridge to sprawl, it would be connected and accessible and be close to both countryside and town.

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Matter 6 (v)

Do the Plans adequately reflect para 81 of the Framework which requires local planning authorities to plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt?

- 1.43 There are exemplary initiatives such as Cambridge Past Present and Future – Coton Countryside reserve and the Country Park to the NW of Cambridge.
- 1.44 Currently the Cambridge Green Belt is mostly in agricultural use and the opportunities to enhance beneficial use as described in NPPF para 81 is limited.
- 1.45 However, additional enhancement to the Green Belt has been realised through the release of Green Belt. The Clay Farm development has opened up a green wedge and the Trumpington Meadows Country Park has also been realised by the release of the Green Belt for Trumpington Meadows.
- 1.46 Further Green Belt releases could be sustainably planned to ensure that opportunities for access, outdoor sport and recreation, visual amenity and biodiversity are all enhanced.

2 SOUNDNESS CRITERION

What part of the Local Plan is unsound and on which soundness criterion it fails?

- 2.1 The Local Plans are not prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development NPPF 151, 152.
- 2.2 The spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change have not been addressed NPPF 154.
- 2.3 The Local Plans are not based on adequate relevant evidence about the Green Belt contrary to the requirements of NPPF 158.

Why it fails

- 2.4 The Green Belt Review is not robust and the assessment is flawed. It is not prepared in accordance with NPPF 84 or 85.

How can the Local Plans be made sound?

- 2.5 The Green Belt Review should be undertaken with regard to NPPF 84 and 85.

3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The Green Belt review of 2012 is an unreliable guide to the value of the Green Belt. It has led to flawed conclusions about how to meet the needs of the City. Those needs are for sustainable housing and employment land, in particular the co-location of R&D within/on the edge of the City.
- 3.2 Allocating land on the edge of Cambridge will provide:

the R&D sector in particular with what the land the market needs and will soon run out of, preventing real damage to what makes Cambridge of regional, national and international importance; and

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it would prevent an unsustainable centrifugal development pattern which is at odds with the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development. *(2936 words not including headings)*

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APPENDIX 1

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NEW ALLOCATIONS/POTENTIAL SUPPLY 2011-2031

	Total Housing Numbers	Historic completions plus allocations plus existing permissions	New/Potential Supply A	Urban Area A-B	Edge of Cambridge B	New Settlements	Villages
CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL	14,000	10,437*1	3,754*1	3,274	480 (GB1=250)*3 (GB2=230)*3		
SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	19,000	14,029*2	5,260*2		100 (NIAB=100)	4,300 (Northstowe=0 Waterbeach=1400 Bourne=1700 West Cambourne=1200)	860
Total	33,000	24,466	9,014	3,274 = 36%	580 = 6%	4,300 = 48%	860 = 10%

*1 Draft submission Plan pages 22 and 25

*2 SCDC Draft Plan page 39 Figure 3

*3 Issues and Options 2 figures

Discounting the sites proposed in the urban area which is the most sustainable development location, the forward strategy expects to deliver:

10% on the edge of Cambridge: 75% in the new settlements: villages 15%

The Structure Plan 2003 Policy 9/1 1999-2016: expects to deliver **Cambridge fringe sites 52%: new settlements 48%.**

This was carried through to CCC Local Plan 2006 and SCDC Local Development Framework 2007-2010.

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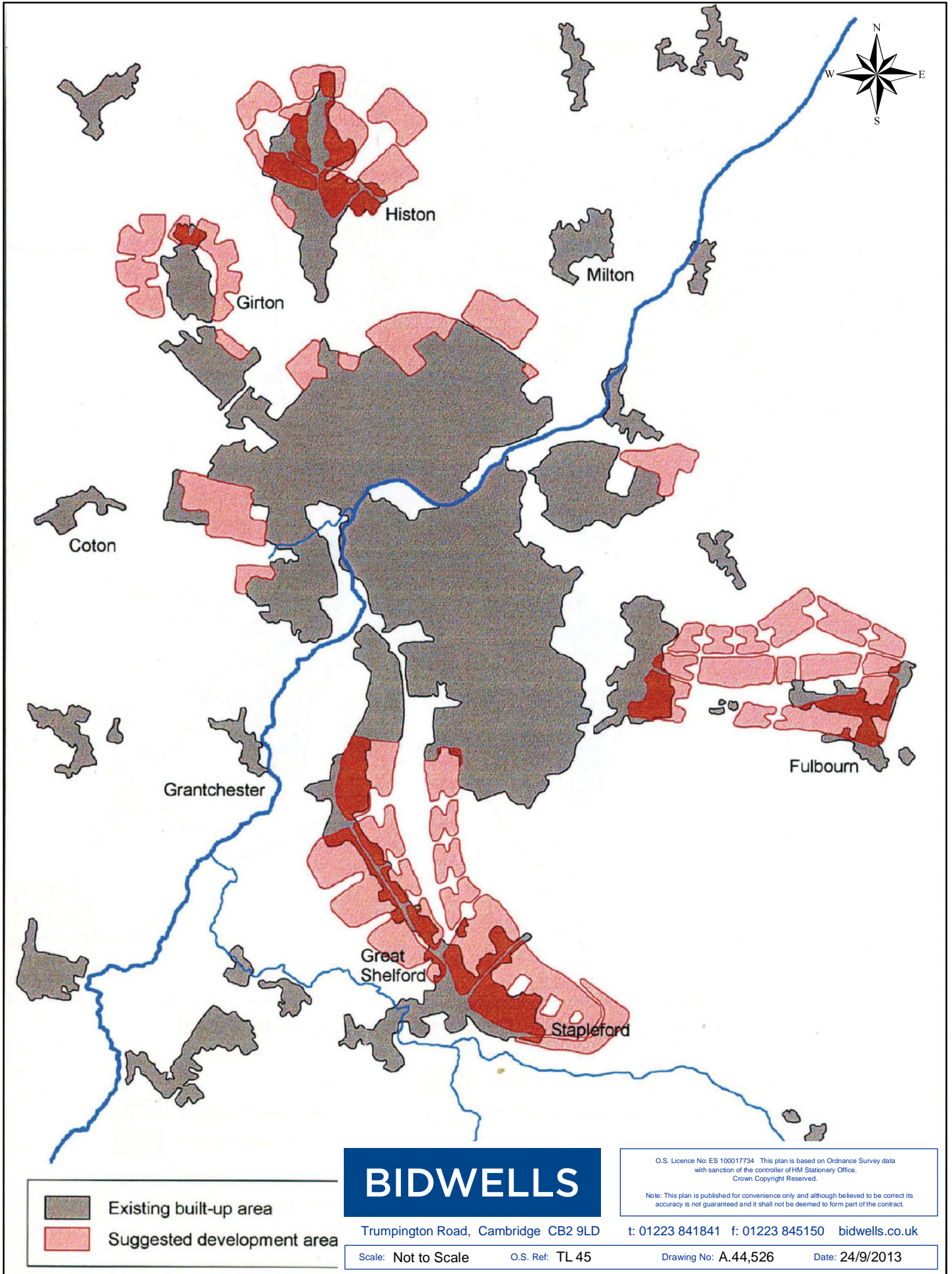
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APPENDIX 2

Figure 15 : Logies 1966
Cambridge South



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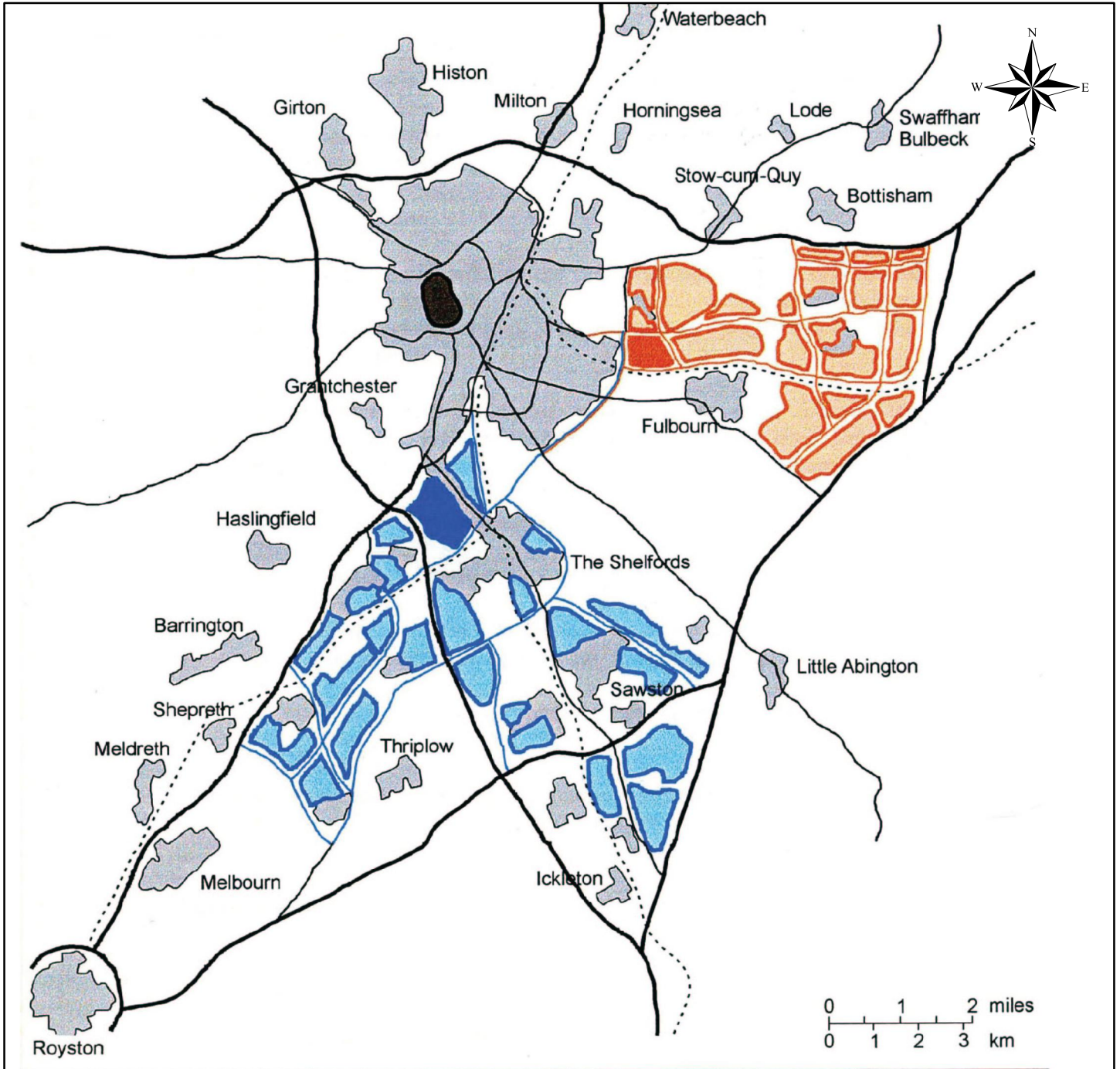
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Appendix 3

Figure 16 : Parry Lewis' 1974 Expanded City Strategy Development
Cambridge South



Development to occur in either an Eastern or Southern direction

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|---|
|  | Existing built-up area |  | Proposed new sub-regional centre - East |
|  | Historic centre |  | Proposed development - Eastern direction |
|  | Strategic roads |  | Proposed new road development - East |
|  | Other principal roads |  | Proposed new sub-regional centre - South |
|  | Railway |  | Proposed development - Southern direction |
| | |  | Proposed new road development - South |

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Trumpington Road, Cambridge CB2 9LD

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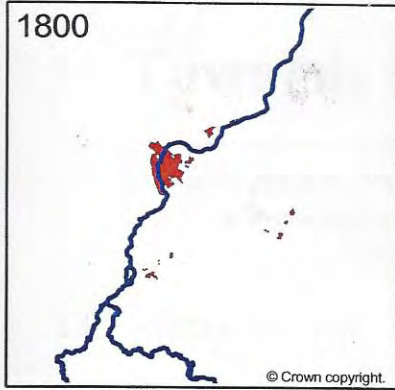
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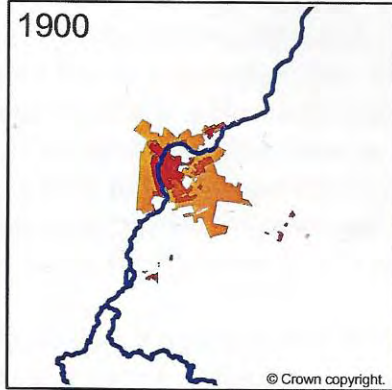
Appendix 4

Cambridge Green Belt Towards 2016

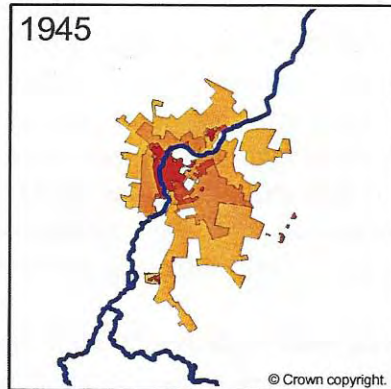
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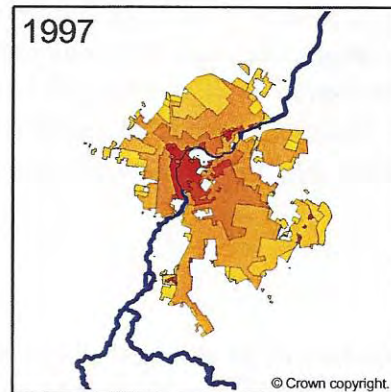
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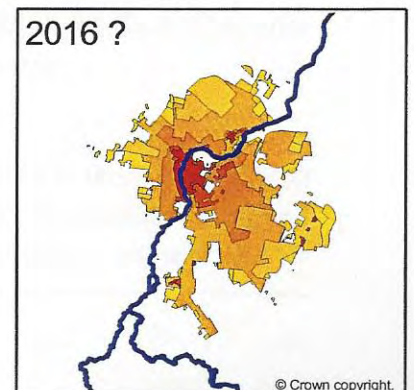
1945



1997



2016 ?



CAMBRIDGE
CITY COUNCIL

Towards a New Cambridge Green Belt

'There may be exceptional cases...where releasing Green Belt land would offer a more sustainable solution than greenfield development elsewhere.'

'Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice', DETR 1998

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The task of determining the future of the Cambridge Green Belt is arguably the most challenging and controversial aspect of the forthcoming review of the Development Plan framework for the Cambridge area. Many people see it as a great success story of post-war planning policy: a clear and unambiguous statement about the limits to the growth of one of the most beautiful cities in England. But an alternative view is beginning to emerge which looks beyond this idyllic vision to the effects of Green Belt policy on Cambridge over the last 40 years, and finds cause for concern that the current Green Belt may not be the right answer to the challenges facing the City in the early 21st century.
- 1.2 This report does not argue that the release of Green Belt land for development will provide the answer for *all* future development needs: Cambridge's growth dynamic is too strong and much of the existing Green Belt is too sensitive for wholesale development. However, it does argue that some parts of the Green Belt could, if developed sensitively, make a vital contribution to nurturing the social and economic well-being of the City as part of a balanced Sub-Regional planning framework. Well-designed and carefully-controlled development could also provide opportunities for positive enhancement of Cambridge's less attractive landscapes, for unlike Bath or Durham, the landscape around Cambridge is often unremarkable, and it is the buildings of Cambridge and their relationship to the landscape that gives the City its unique character.
- 1.3 This report traces the origins of the Cambridge Green Belt and tests the assumptions and objectives of early policy-makers against present-day conditions. It carries out an up-to-date analysis of the role of the Green Belt in preserving the physical setting of the City and in respect of wider social, economic and environmental considerations. It concludes by identifying parts of the Green Belt that could support beneficial development without harming its principle purpose. These areas would need more detailed scrutiny and evaluation as part of the future review of Structure and Local Plans before any final decision is made about their release.

Cambridge Then and Now

- 1.4 The Cambridge Green Belt had its roots in the 1930s, began to be firmed up in the early 1950s and was formally defined on the Town Map in 1965. The policy makers who initiated this process would find the Cambridge of today a very different place. Consider just seven key indicators across a range of socio-economic factors:
- (a) ***The Economy***
In 1948 there were 53,000 jobs in the Cambridge area, by 1971 there were 70,000 and 80,000 plus in 1996. In 1948 some 24% of jobs were in manufacturing and 50% in services; in 1996 manufacturing accounted for about 8% and services for

75%. Cambridge is the preeminent centre for high tech industry in Britain and has few rivals in Europe - *Newsweek* recently identified it as the top European centre challenging the dominance of Silicon Valley ¹. Another survey identified Cambridge as the second most popular choice for relocating a business in Britain ². The Chancellor's Pre-Budget Report ³ and the recent competitiveness White Paper from the DTI ⁴ has stressed the importance to the economy of the universities, R&D and 'clusters of similar businesses', all of which reinforces the dynamic importance of the Cambridge area.

(b) **Tourism**

In 1997 Cambridge attracted an estimated 3.25 million visitors spending £186 million. The City received around 0.46 million visitors in 1965. In 1998 readers of the *Traveller* voted Cambridge their ninth most popular UK city (ahead of London ⁵).

(c) **Education**

In 1951 there were 7,991 students at the University of Cambridge and 10,144 in 1966. There is a total of 22,521 students at the University of Cambridge and Anglia Polytechnic University in 1998. Cambridge has a new Regional College and is one of the largest centres for teaching English as a foreign language outside London. The City is at the hub of what is called increasingly a 'learning region'.

(d) **Shopping**

Cambridge is the primary centre of choice for a catchment of 211,000 for regular durable/comparison shopping; it is the occasional centre for another 1,288,000. Major developments like the Lion Yard, the Grafton Centre and retail warehousing mean that the 234,260 sq. m of floorspace now available is 50% greater than the 1971 total. It is the second most important shopping centre in the region after Norwich ⁶.

(e) **Recreation**

Since the 1950s there has been a marked increase in the amount of leisure activities taken away from the home and especially in active pursuits such as eating out, and visiting attractions. Cambridge has become the main focus for sub-regional leisure activity. Leisure studies and the industry regularly identify an unmet demand for cinemas, night clubs, ice skating, ten pin bowling and drive in restaurants.

(f) **Mobility**

In 1951 only 14% of households nationally owned one or more cars compared with 70% in 1995. Only 10% of households had two or more cars in 1971 compared with 25% in 1996. In 1971 51% of households in Cambridge owned one or more cars compared with 67% in 1991 ⁷.

(g) **Health**

Cambridge has become a renowned centre of excellence in the fields of health care and research. 13% of all jobs in the City are in the health care sector. Over 1,400 clinical research projects are recorded at Addenbrookes Hospital a figure which will rise by 20-35% in 1999 when the Wellcome/MRC building and the Addenbrookes centre for Clinical Investigation open. The presence of the University Clinical School on site since 1976, with other institutions at Papworth and Hinchingsbrook, has acted as a catalyst to strong growth in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors. At Addenbrookes in 1947 there were 7,713 in-patients admitted and 109,000 out-patient attendances compared with 45,000 in-patient episodes and 255,000 out-patient attendances in 1997 ⁸. Even allowing for changing hospital practices the transport demands of the hospital are now far

more intense.

- 1.5 There are two other respects in which the context today is very different. First, the new emphasis that future development respects the objectives and principles of sustainability^{9 10 11}. This means securing a better relationship between housing, jobs, and services while embracing the complex interactions between environmental, economic and equity issues. Second, the planned development of Cambridge can call on a much more sophisticated policy and regulatory framework - national planning policy guidance, regional planning guidance, structure plans and local plans - to achieve the community's objectives. Other planning tools could be considered as alternatives to some of the old simplicities of the Green Belt over part of its extent to provide both more flexibility and continuing protection where it is necessary.

A Vision for Cambridge

- 1.6 Policy makers who can influence the future of the Cambridge area must ask themselves whether retaining the Green Belt on its current boundaries is a satisfactory response to these changed circumstances. The City Council believes that it may not be. However, a new Green Belt must flow from a clear vision for the future of Cambridge, not simply in response to changed circumstances. The vision for the City has social, economic, physical and functional dimensions:

- (a) ***Social***
 - (i) A city offering a full range of opportunities for all, particularly those with special needs, including affordable housing.
 - (ii) A city that values and nurtures distinctive geographical and cultural communities.
- (b) ***Economic***
 - (i) A city where economic development is sustainable as to its social, economic and environmental impacts.
 - (ii) A city that realises its unique national potential to be at the forefront of knowledge, research and development and the new industries of the 21st century.
- (c) ***Physical***
 - (i) A compact, well-defined city offering good accessibility, especially in the relationship between home and work place.
 - (ii) A green and civilised historic city offering a high quality environment.
- (d) ***Functional***
 - (i) A city meeting the appropriate regular service needs of the Sub-Region.
 - (ii) A city that embraces change positively and seeks to enhance its regional, national and international roles.

- 1.7 A tightly drawn Green Belt was an appropriate planning tool to help realise the more limited vision of the past - maintaining Cambridge as a small university cum market town. But is it the right tool now? This paper shows that a full review is necessary as part of the strategy for accommodating future economic growth in the Cambridge Sub-Region, and that the inner boundary of the Green Belt can be changed without undermining fundamental local and national objectives.

2.0 History of the Cambridge Green Belt

2.1 This section looks at the history of the Cambridge Green Belt. In summary, it was prompted by concerns to protect the character of Cambridge, to prevent sprawl and loss of countryside. It has successfully prevented development. Its boundaries have altered little in over 40 years, leading to a shortage of development land and to regular challenges through development plan and development control procedures. Several attempts at ad-hoc removals of land from the Green Belt have not been successful and a full review is seen as a more appropriate way forward.

Early Origins

2.2 The idea of protecting Cambridge by a Green Belt emerged as a reaction to its suburban spread between 1918 and 1939. Fig.2 illustrates the historical development of the City. The Cambridge Preservation Society was founded as a response to this trend in 1928. Its main concern was to prevent this spread and the loss of the surrounding countryside through ribbon development and to save Cambridge from the introduction of mass production industry, a fate that had befallen Oxford with the Morris motor works. In reaction to this, the *Cambridgeshire Regional Planning Report* (1934) made recommendations to keep a generally open belt of country around Cambridge. The authors of the *Cambridge and District Town Planning Scheme* prepared in 1936-39 intended that the growth of Cambridge should be restricted. In the absence of any other statutory powers this was to be done by zoning open countryside for low density housing.

2.3 After the war, two reports were produced which have proved very influential. In 1943 Stephen Dykes Bower was asked to review the planning of Cambridge. In an unpublished report he proposed a Green Belt for Cambridge in order to prevent its loss of character through uncontrolled growth. His thinking was reflected in the Holford and Wright Report *Cambridge Planning Proposals* (1950). This argued that among the qualities of Cambridge most people would want to retain was 'countryside near the town' (para. 275) and proposed a boundary line beyond which built development should not be permitted. In choosing the line they 'sought to prevent Girton, Cherry Hinton and Grantchester becoming merged in the built up area of the town by the maintenance of intervening strips of unbuilt-on land'. The line would also maintain the green wedges along the river, keep open countryside near the centre of the town on its west side, and exclude development from the foothills of the Gog Magog Hills (para.299). Within the provisional boundary there were about 1,500 acres (600 hectares) of land available for development (para. 301). The report refers to the land between Girton, Cherry Hinton, Fen Ditton, Grantchester and Fulbourn and the built up area as *Green Belts*' (para. 304).

2.4 The *Draft Cambridgeshire Development Plan* was published in 1952. It aimed to preserve Cambridge as a predominantly University town with a population ceiling of 100,000. The Plan was approved in 1954 and showed 'areas of great landscape value' (para.22) in the south of Cambridgeshire extending close in towards Cambridge over the Gog Magog Hills and along the valley of the River Cam. It was proposed that this area should be protected and development controlled.

2.5 In 1957 the Minister gave approval in principle for a Green Belt round the city. The area covered by draft proposals from the County Council was to be immediately treated as Green Belt. This was in line with national policy. *Circular 42/55* invited Local Planning

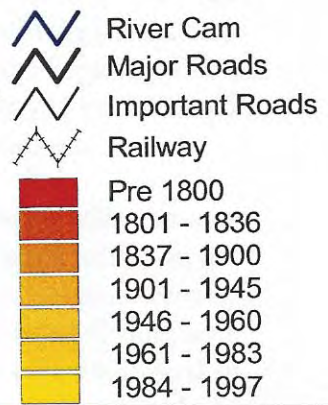
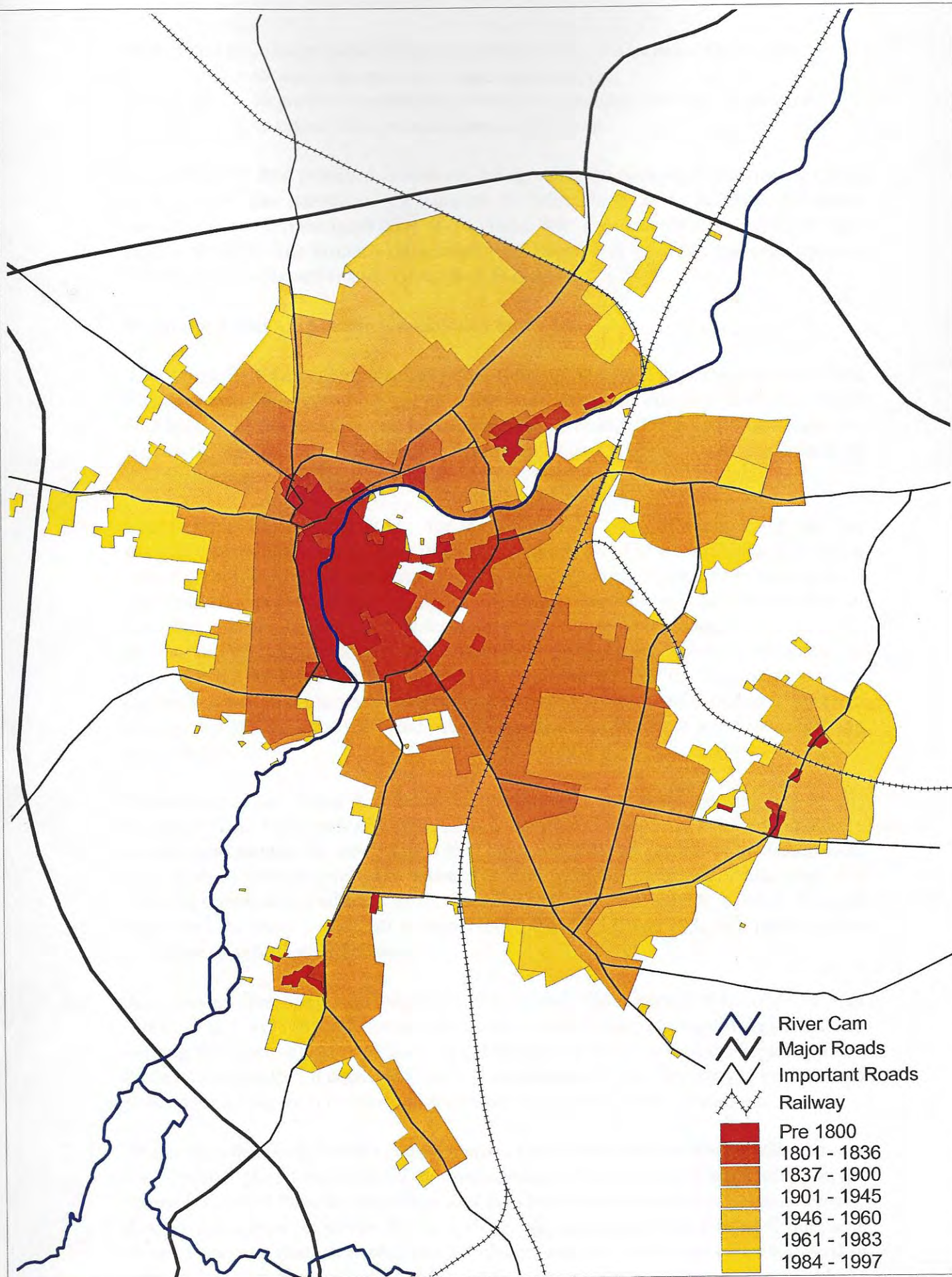


Fig. 2

Historical Growth of Cambridge

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Section / Department:	EDC Team, Planning
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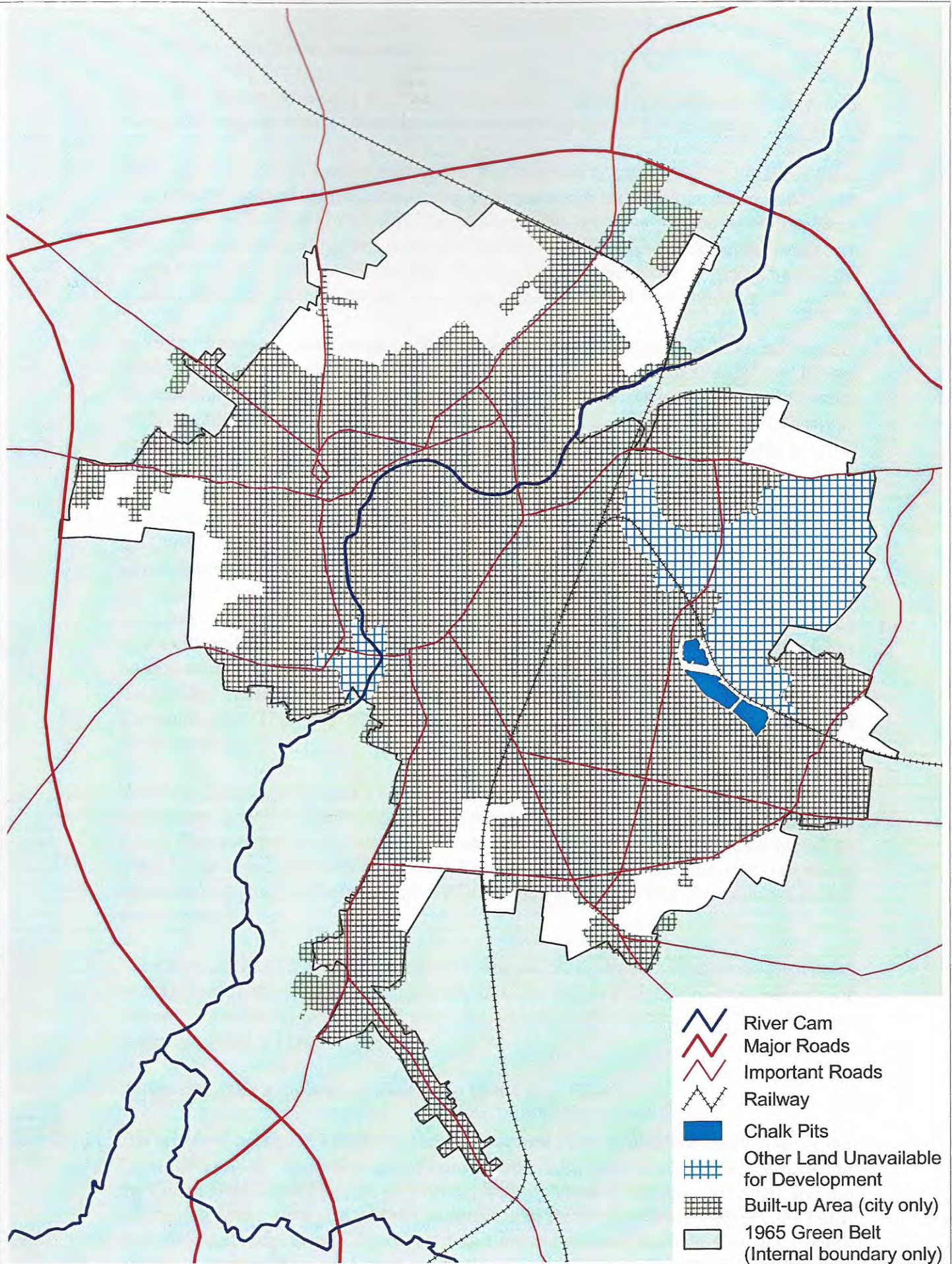
Authorities to consider establishing Green Belts where it was desirable in order:

- (a) to check the growth of large built up areas;
- (b) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another; or
- (c) to preserve the special character of towns.

Circular 50/57 then provided procedures for agreeing the detailed boundaries of Green Belts. This also introduced the concept of 'white land' to be reserved for future development within the inner edge of the Green Belt. Fig.3 shows this reserve of white land as at 1954. The formally designated 1965 Green Belt boundary has been applied, which very closely reflects the Green Belt as proposed in 1954.

From the Town Map to the Green Belt Local Plan

- 2.6 The Green Belt was fully embodied in the Development Plan with the approval of the First Review of the Town Map in 1965. The land around the city was defined as Green Belt in order to retain and protect its existing rural character (*Written statement* page 3-4, section 6). As advised in *Circular 50/57*, a reserve of land was left to meet the immediate development needs of the City (Fig.3).
- 2.7 The next development in policy for the Green Belt was the approval of the first *Cambridgeshire Structure Plan* in 1980. The main thrust of its policies was to slow the rate of growth in the south and west of the County, while encouraging the expansion of job opportunities in the north-east. In the Cambridge area there was an overall policy of restraint on large scale growth, while making provision for continuing development in or close to Cambridge necessary to maintain the City's role as a sub-regional centre. In approving the Structure Plan the Secretary of State indicated that the main purpose of the Green Belt was to preserve the unique character of the city and to maintain its present setting. He endorsed the view that boundaries should be drawn to leave room for long term growth.
- 2.8 Preparation of the Green Belt Local Plan was begun following the approval of this Structure Plan. The *Cambridge Green Belt Local Plan Consultation Draft* was published in 1983, and showed for the first time both inner and outer boundaries of the Green Belt. This showed approximately 120 hectares of land with development potential excluded from the Green Belt in addition to the exclusion of Marshall's Airport. The City Council supported the majority of sites to be excluded from the Green Belt, and proposed the exclusion of a further 67 hectares.
- 2.9 An amended plan was put on Deposit in 1984 (*Cambridge Green Belt Local Plan*, May 1984). The City Council informed the County Council that they would prefer to delay settling the inner boundary of the Green Belt pending the review of the Structure Plan. Notwithstanding this, it urged the County Council to modify the boundary to exclude land needed for a long term reserve and for research and development buildings.
- 2.10 At this time the Government's commitment to Green Belts was reaffirmed with *Circular 14/84* which placed emphasis on the permanence of Green Belts. Commenting on the Green Belt Local Plan, the Department of the Environment stated that '*...the amount of land excluded from the Green Belt at its inner edge is probably only minimally adequate to accommodate long term pressure for change even at the modest rate envisaged in current Structure Plan policy...*'; and '*...we do not consider that the boundary should be*



-  River Cam
-  Major Roads
-  Important Roads
-  Railway
-  Chalk Pits
-  Other Land Unavailable for Development
-  Built-up Area (city only)
-  1965 Green Belt (Internal boundary only)

Fig. 3

1954 White Land Reserve

Date: 14/12/98
 Drawn By: Tim Cliff
 Section / Department: Policy Group, Planning



Scale: 1:45,000



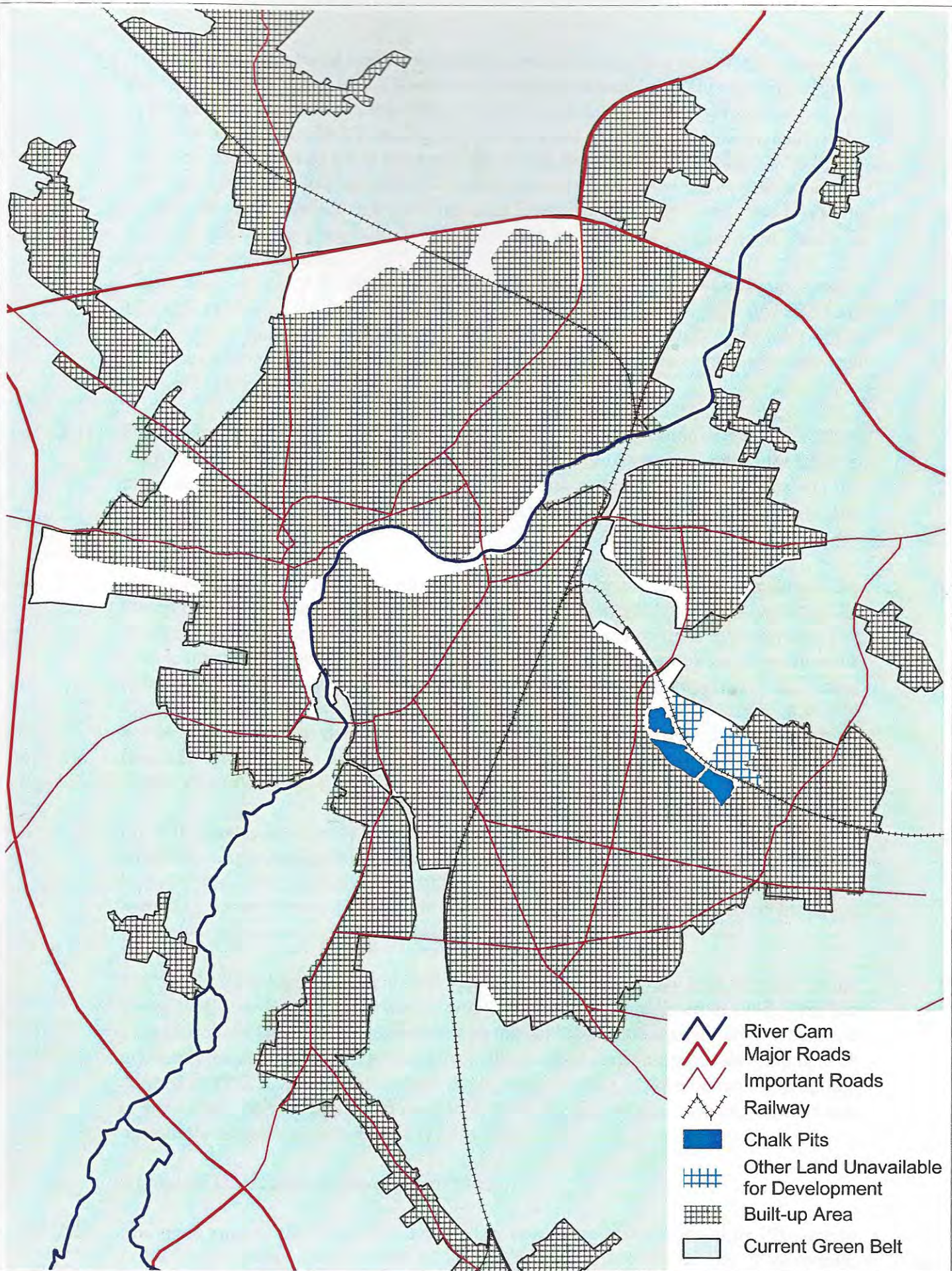
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any tighter than is now proposed.'

- 2.11 A public inquiry was held in 1985. The Inspector agreed with the County and City Councils that a number of sites should be excluded from the Green Belt.
- 2.12 Meanwhile work had commenced on the Replacement Cambridgeshire Structure Plan. The County Council delayed considering representations on the proposed modifications to the Green Belt Local Plan until September 1986, after the publication of the Draft Structure Plan Review. At this point the County Council decided to designate land south of the city (Clay Farm) as Green Belt. In June 1987 the Secretary of State directed the County Council not to adopt the Green Belt Local Plan until further notice.
- 2.13 In 1988 *Planning Policy Guidance (PPG 2)* was published. It stated that the Government attached great importance to Green Belts and that Green Belt policy and related development control policies set out in 1955 remain valid. In comparison to Circular 42/55 it added two additional purposes for including land within a Green Belt: firstly to safeguard the surrounding countryside from encroachment and secondly to assist in urban regeneration.
- 2.14 The replacement *Cambridgeshire Structure Plan* was approved in 1989. It maintained the overall policy of controlling the rate of growth in the south and west and maximising opportunities for economic development in the north and east. In his approval letter the Secretary of State modified Green Belt policy to provide strategic guidance on the inner boundary. The policy stated that this should be drawn close to the urban area to the south of the city and elsewhere it should be drawn to provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in Cambridge, excluding the area now known as the Cambridge Northern Fringe, an area of special restraint protected from inappropriate development. This was significantly different and more restrictive than the 1980 Structure Plan.
- 2.15 With the Secretary of State's decision on the Structure Plan in 1989 and on the new settlements in 1991/2, the County Council published final modifications to the Green Belt Local Plan relating to the Northern Fringe in May 1992. The City Council raised no objection to these, although the County Council was informed that this does not imply acceptance of the inner boundary of the Green Belt as proposed by the County Council in its entirety.
- 2.16 The *Green Belt Local Plan* was adopted in August 1992, 11 years after the original brief was agreed. It states that, '*it is expected that the adopted Green Belt boundary will remain substantially intact until after the Structure Plan period [i.e. into the next century]*' (para 2.13).

Policy after the Adoption of the Green Belt Local Plan

- 2.17 The approval of the 1995 *Cambridgeshire Structure Plan* represented no change for the Green Belt policy. The policy of restraint around Cambridge continues, and policies in the Green Belt Local Plan are confirmed, both in terms of the area protected and the appropriate uses. However, at the Examination In Public, the Green Belt at Clay Farm was discussed under issue 2, Housing in the Cambridge Area. Both the City and County Councils sought to release land from the Green Belt to meet the City's housing



-  River Cam
-  Major Roads
-  Important Roads
-  Railway
-  Chalk Pits
-  Other Land Unavailable for Development
-  Built-up Area
-  Current Green Belt



Fig. 4

Current White Land Reserve

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requirements. The Panel considered that this issue brought to a head the fundamental dilemma facing the City, which is whether Cambridge should have a limited size in order to preserve its character, or whether it should expand. The Panel concluded that the alteration of the Green Belt boundary at Clay Farm had a strategic dimension, and should only be done as part of a full review of the Green Belt (Panel Report para 2.36-2.37). Elsewhere the Panel Report states that appropriate changes to the Green Belt boundary are feasible without affecting the setting of the historic parts of the City (para 1.47). Its recommendation in paragraph 1.56 concerning housing and employment issues is particularly apt, it states:

*"A strategic review of the dispersal policy so far as it applies to Cambridgeshire and a strategic review of the boundaries and extent of Green Belt in the light of PPG 13 is initiated as a matter of some urgency. The later, in our view, should leave some of the inner boundaries of the Green Belt unchanged to ensure that the setting of the historic parts of the City is maintained;"*¹².

- 2.18 Nationally, thinking on Green Belts was moving on with the revision of PPG 2 in 1995. This states that Green Belt boundaries should be drawn to take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. It also amends the aim of preserving the special character of towns to make it clear that it should only apply to historic towns and their setting.
- 2.19 The *Cambridge Local Plan* was adopted in 1996. This shows the inner boundary of the Green Belt, which was amended in the area of West Cambridge to take account of the needs of University development, balancing this with the quality of the environment. The City Council also sought to release some additional land from the Green Belt, most notably Clay Farm to the south of the City, but these were not supported by the Local Plan Inspector. This was because it was considered that Green Belt boundaries should not be altered piecemeal, but should be subject to a proper review. The current inner Green Belt boundary is that approved in the Green Belt Local Plan, as modified by the Cambridge Local Plan (Fig.1).
- 2.20 Fig.4 illustrates the current Green Belt Boundary, and the current white land reserve, which has been significantly reduced since the 1950s as illustrated in Fig.3. It must also be noted that of this current reserve of land, large areas are in fact Local Plan allocations including former gravel workings in the east of the City and land allocated for major University expansion in west Cambridge
- 2.21 The *South Cambridgeshire Local Plan* approved in 1993 made very little reference to the Green Belt. The *Local Plan Review Consultation Draft* was published in 1997. This has a chapter on the Green Belt which deals with the conflicts that can arise between the need to control the expansion of Cambridge and the demand for appropriate development as defined in PPG 2. The major change in the policy relating to development appropriate to the Green Belt is the inclusion of affordable housing where no other suitable site outside the Green Belt is available (Policy GB2).

Aims and Objectives of Green Belt Policies

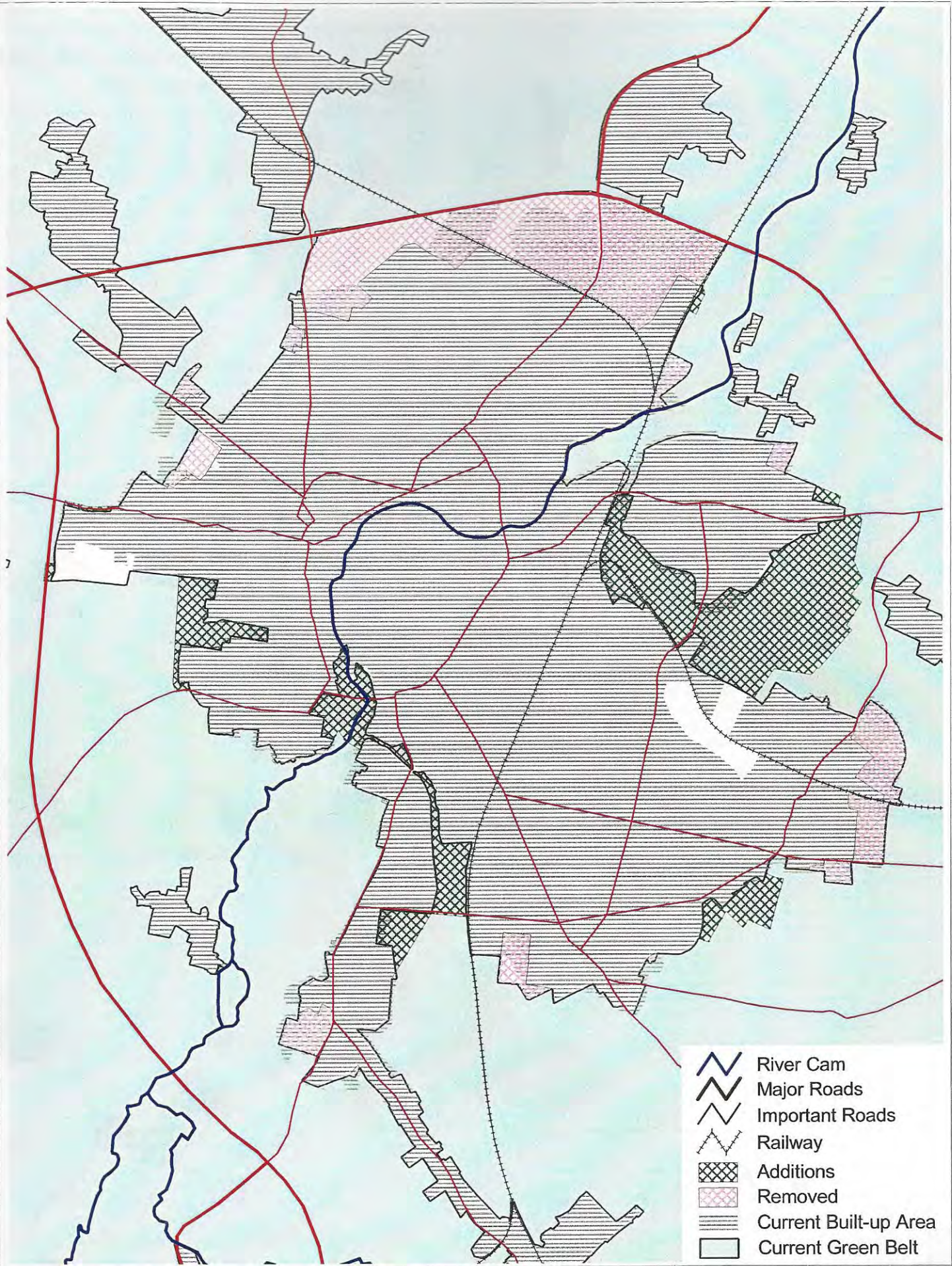
- 2.22 The main aims of the Green Belt Local Plan, consistent with the Structure Plan, are to preserve the special character of Cambridge and to maintain the quality of its setting. One of the specific aims is to control the urban expansion of Cambridge. This is done

through the inner boundary, which is drawn close to the urban area south of the city but excludes the Cambridge Northern Fringe, the area of restraint reserved for development which has an essential need to be in Cambridge.

- 2.23 Policies in the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans support the Green Belt Local Plan and are consistent with the Structure Plan. All the relevant plans, excluding the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 1993, state that the purpose of the Green Belt is to protect the setting and character of Cambridge. The desirability of checking further expansion of Cambridge and containing urban growth is emphasised more strongly in the Structure Plan than the Local Plans. It can therefore be seen that the Green Belt has been called upon to play both a conservation role in protecting the setting of Cambridge and a strategic policy role to constrain its growth. The City Council considers that up to now the constraint role of Green Belt policy has been unduly emphasized and that significant elements of the current Green Belt are not required to protect the setting and special character of the City.
- 2.24 When compared with the five purposes of Green Belt policy set out in PPG 2, the purpose which is consistently mentioned in all the plans is its role in preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment is emphasised less, and assisting in urban regeneration is not considered relevant.

Challenges to the Green Belt

- 2.25 Although the Green Belt has been retained largely unchanged through the planning process, it has always been controversial. Attempts were made to release additional areas through representations on the Green Belt Local Plan and through the Cambridge Local Plan. Fig.5 highlights the changes to the Green Belt boundary between 1965-1996, including additions and deletions. There were also more fundamental challenges. The concept of restraint surrounding Cambridge was questioned as early as 1966 when the *Future Shape of Cambridge* was published by the then City Architect and Planning Officer, Gordon Logie. It looked at how the city should develop over the next forty to fifty years and envisaged far reaching changes. Future tongues of development were suggested which would allow the city to grow, while maintaining and enhancing its man-made advantages (Fig.6).
- 2.26 In the early 1970s Professor J Parry Lewis was commissioned by national and local government to undertake a *Study of the Cambridge Sub-Region* (1974). This study was concerned with taking the pressures off the historic centre of Cambridge. A variety of strategies were outlined, each at a variety of levels of growth, to see the advantages and disadvantages over a wide range of strategies.
- 2.27 Parry Lewis reached the conclusion that Cambridge '*must grow in order to retain as much of its character as it can*' (page 80). He was convinced that the only way to conserve the historic centre was to have major expansion around a new centre, the best place for this being to the south, and second best to the east (Fig.7).
- 2.28 However, national and local commitment to maintaining the Green Belt was too strong, as was the belief that the growth of Cambridge should be strongly restrained. Whilst this commitment to Green Belts remains, it is increasingly being recognised that there are other issues to be taken into account. This is examined more in Section 5 of this report.



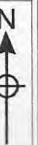
-  River Cam
-  Major Roads
-  Important Roads
-  Railway
-  Additions
-  Removed
-  Current Built-up Area
-  Current Green Belt

Fig. 5

Green Belt Changes 1965-1996

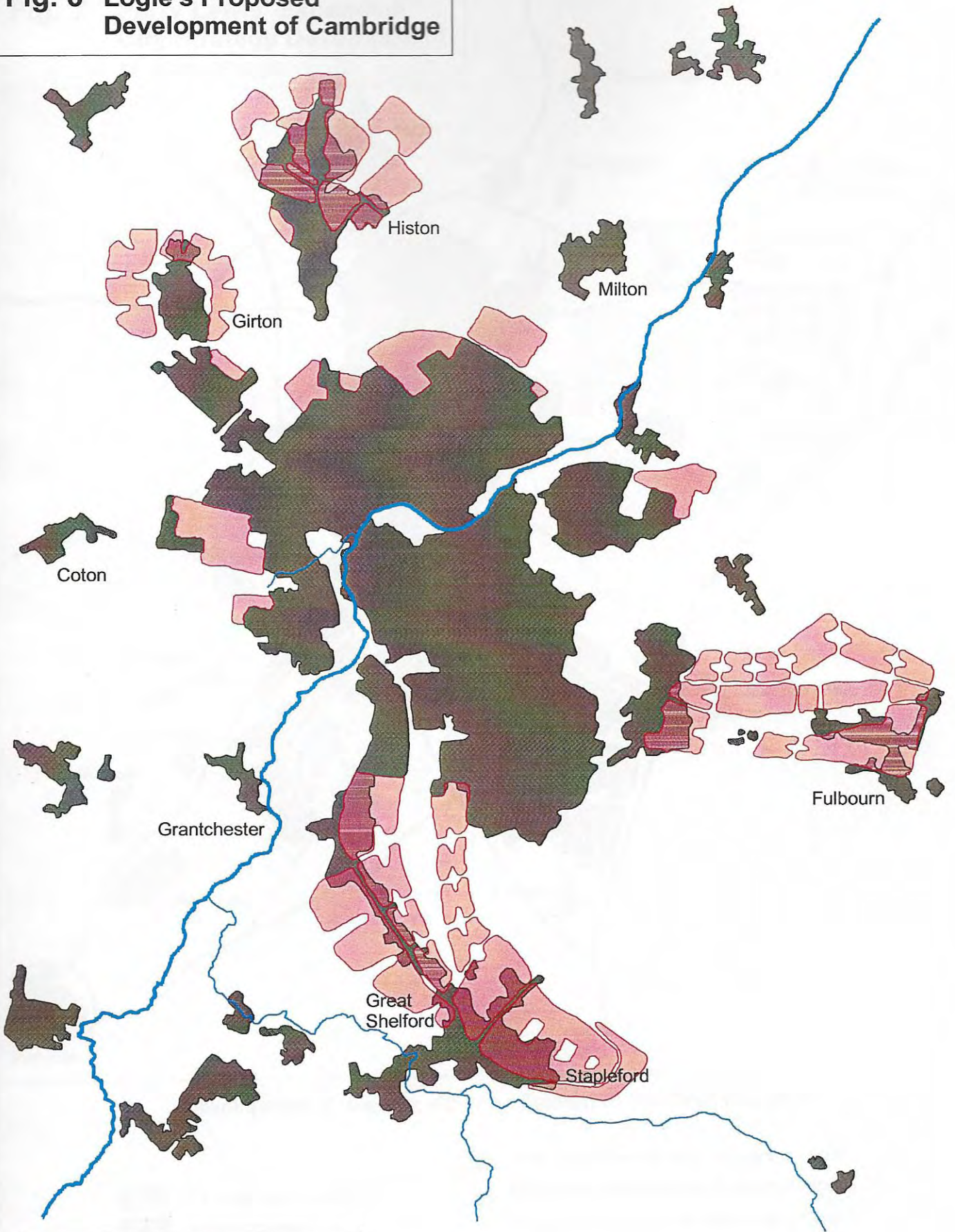
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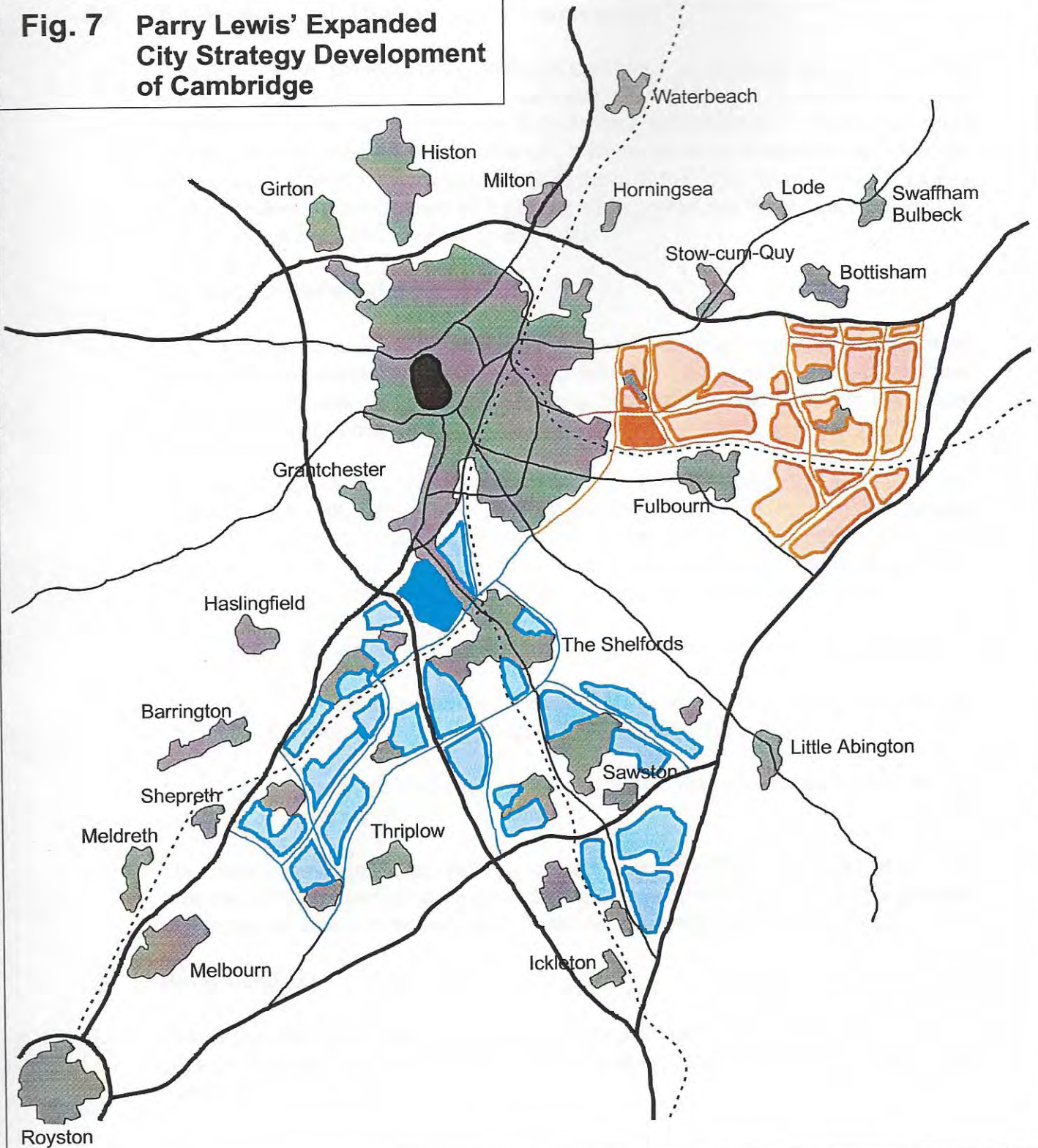
Fig. 6 Logie's Proposed Development of Cambridge














- Existing built-up area
- Suggested development area

0 0.5 1 miles
0 0.5 1 1.5 km

Fig. 7 Parry Lewis' Expanded City Strategy Development of Cambridge



Development to occur in either an Eastern or Southern direction

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|---|
|  | Existing built-up area |  | Proposed new sub-regional centre - East |
|  | Historic centre |  | Proposed development - Eastern direction |
|  | Strategic roads |  | Proposed new road development - East |
|  | Other principal roads |  | Proposed new sub-regional centre - South |
|  | Railway |  | Proposed development - Southern direction |
| | |  | Proposed new road development - South |

3.0 Environmental Analysis and Commentary

- 3.1 This part of the report looks at the setting of Cambridge recognising that the Green Belt is not in itself any guide to the quality and value of the landscape. It concerns itself only with the environmental and landscape factors which are important in shaping the future development of Cambridge. In summary, it identifies those features important to the setting and character of Cambridge and maps them. It finds that not all of the Green Belt is of equivalent value with parts of it playing no important role other than by being part of a blanket presumption against development.

Defining Characteristics

- 3.2 The landscape features which define and protect the setting of Cambridge need to be identified and assessed so that future development does not detract from them. Irretrievable or unacceptable change to these features would detract from the special characteristics of Cambridge.
- 3.3 The key resources that are defining characteristics and essential to the fabric and character of Cambridge include archaeological and historic sites, listed buildings, landmark buildings, conservation areas, the commons and open spaces and natural features such as river corridors. The defining characteristics which relate more specifically to the setting of Cambridge are the elements which contribute to:
- (a) the character and quality of the rural landscape surrounding the City;
 - (b) the setting of the City, views of the City skyline, the interface between the City, its necklace villages and the rural landscape; and
 - (c) the urban landscape which includes the major open space networks and river corridors.

The areas constituting these defining characteristics are illustrated in Fig.8 and are explored in the following paragraphs. In some areas these features overlap with areas designated as 'area of best landscape' by the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Rural Landscape

- 3.4 Cambridge sits on the boundary of three major character areas determined mostly by geology, soils and land use: the Fens, the East Anglian Chalk, and the Bedfordshire and Cambridge Claylands¹³.
- 3.5 The surface and more importantly the drift geology have an important influence on soils and hence land use and settlement types. The quality of farmland soils varies. There is a small amount of grade 4 land along the river valleys and fens, while the rest is grades 2 and 3. Agricultural land classification should be regarded as one of a number of criteria to be considered when assessing suitable locations for development.
- 3.6 Water is a major element within the Cambridge countryside. In addition to the Rivers Cam, Granta and Rhee, there are many ditches and streams, especially in the Fenlands and the Claylands. Spring fed streams are an important feature in the Chalklands. Water,

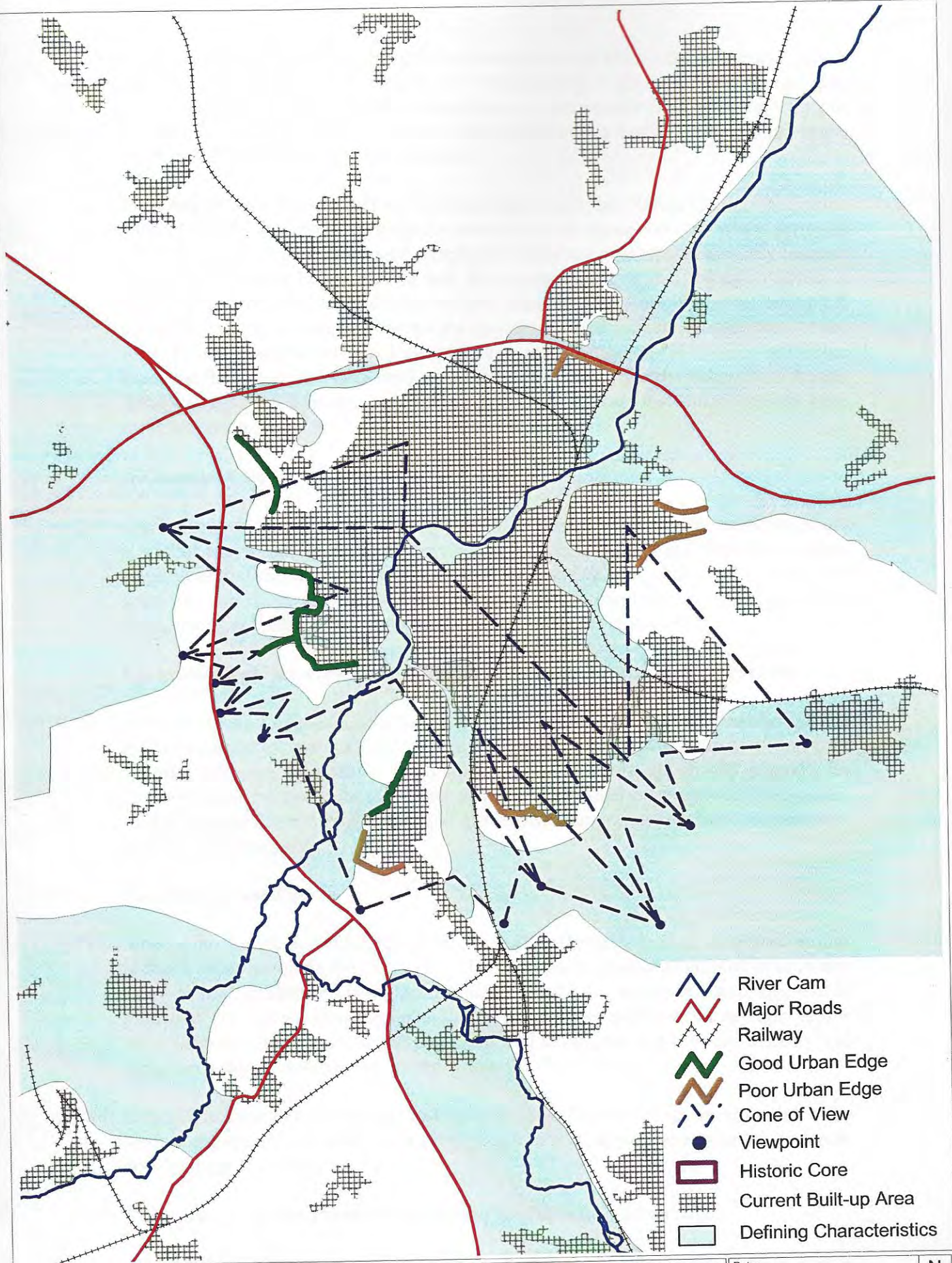
water courses and flood plains are regarded as essential defining characteristics of the area, to be protected against development.

Setting of the City

- 3.7 One of the important features of Cambridge is the relationship between the City and its rural setting. The chalklands to the south east rise to approximately 75m at Wandlebury and afford extensive views of the City. This open landscape with its rolling hills is amongst the most attractive countryside near Cambridge. To the west, the clay lands rise to a height of 75m west of Hardwick. There are good views across to the City from the west of Cambridge.
- 3.8 To the north and to the east the land is generally low and there are no major viewpoints apart from the elevated A14. The cones of view considered important for the setting and skyline of Cambridge in the Local Plan are indicated in Fig.8
- 3.9 The notion of a contained town within the rural landscape is an important defining characteristic of Cambridge. Looking from the M 11 across towards the City there is still a distinct differentiation discernable between town and countryside. It is important that this separation be maintained. The separation between the town and the A14 has unfortunately been eroded. From a landscape setting consideration it would be preferable to protect part of the northern fringe area in such a way so as to conserve the notion that the City lies within a rural setting, rather than allowing development to run out to meet the A14. To the north east Chesterton Fen is a defining characteristic which should be retained and protected from future development.
- 3.10 Cambridge is surrounded by a number of necklace villages. These are important elements of the setting of the City which is partly defined by the relationship between it, its surrounding villages and the rural landscape. The separation between some of the villages and Cambridge is not well defined. For instance, from the public domain, there is only a token separation between Girton and Cambridge. From a purely environmental perception, Girton ostensibly lies to the north of the A14, with the area to the south integral to Cambridge. In other villages the separation from the public domain no longer exists - for instance between Great Shelford and the City there is no separation evident. Where the area of separation between some of the necklace villages and Cambridge is much reduced, such as between the City and Histon/Impington, Milton and Fen Ditton the remaining areas represent defining characteristics and should be protected from development.
- 3.11 The City skyline is not a particularly dominant feature. However there are views across to church spires and towers, college and other buildings. Areas which have good panoramic views of the City should generally be protected from development.

Green Corridors

- 3.12 Cambridge is endowed with green space which sweeps in along the corridor of the River Cam linking the claylands to the south west of the City to the fenlands in the north east. The green spaces associated with the River Cam and its flood plain relate and give a setting to the historic City core, and are defining characteristics of the City.



-  River Cam
-  Major Roads
-  Railway
-  Good Urban Edge
-  Poor Urban Edge
-  Cone of View
-  Viewpoint
-  Historic Core
-  Current Built-up Area
-  Defining Characteristics



Fig. 8

Environmental Capital

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- 3.13 Other important green spaces include the Hobson's Brook/ Vicar's Brook corridor, which links the area between Trumpington and Great Shelford, with the River Cam corridor. The other is based on the East Cambridge Nature Conservation Area, which is a tract of land running approximately in a north-south direction for four kilometres, linking the south east of the City to the Cam corridor.
- 3.14 The Cam corridor, Hobson's Brook and the East Cambridge Nature Conservation Area are ecologically important. At a smaller scale, so are the green corridors which permeate into the City from the countryside. These are important greenspaces not only because they form a bridge between town and the countryside, but also through offering a backdrop of trees, hedges and other natural features. They are important ecological corridors, helping to safeguard against the fragmentation of habitat. They include, to the west of Cambridge, the Bin Brook corridor, the western hedgerows in towards the Roman Road and the Coton footpath corridor. In the north of the City is the Mereway, a Roman Road with associated ancient hedgerows and the link between the Milton Country Park and Chesterton Fen.

A Compact City

- 3.15 Cambridge is a compact City, especially on its western edge, where the rural hinterland is within easy reach of the City centre. The City centre itself is compact and many neighbourhood communities are within walking distance of it. The countryside to the south and east of the City is often also within easy walking distance, whilst that to the north and west is effectively curtailed by the A14 and the motorway.

Environmental Features National Nature Reserves and Archaeological Sites

- 3.16 National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest are all regarded as important defining characteristics. County Wildlife Sites and City Wildlife Sites are important at the regional and local levels and should generally be conserved, unless exceptionally, other provisions of equal or more worth are made. Archaeological Remains and Scheduled Ancient Monuments are regarded as important defining characteristics.

Planning for the Future

- 3.17 Most of the important defining characteristics of Cambridge's setting, as defined earlier in this section, lie within the Green Belt. There is also a substantial amount of land that is not of high quality and is not contributing towards the setting of Cambridge that is protected by Green Belt designation. Furthermore analysis shows that major improvements can be made to the City edge, and to the interface between the City and the countryside by some development within the Green Belt.
- 3.18 Taking into account the landscape and environmental features which are essential to the setting and special character of Cambridge as a historic town, the constraints to future development arise from a need to:
- (a) Respect areas of high quality landscape and urban edge;
 - (b) respect areas of countryside important to the setting of Cambridge, and to

maintain areas of countryside separating the City and surrounding villages;

- (c) maintain a distinct edge to the City. In terms of landscape treatment, the edge should be, when viewed from the outside, of a semi-natural landscape integrated with the built form. This would normally be mature trees and hedgerows, with a gradual gradation in both height and density of the built form, low at the edges, building to higher densities toward the centre; and
- (d) preserve sensitive areas such as National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves, SSSI's, County Wildlife Sites, City Wildlife Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and archaeological and cultural heritage sites.

3.19 From the broad analysis carried out for this report it would appear to be possible to release land from the Green Belt for development whilst preserving the setting and historic character of Cambridge. There would inevitably be a loss of countryside but this would be the case wherever else the development were to be located in the Sub-Region.

3.20 Finally large parts of the Green Belt play no wider recreation role other than visually through being open space and are of little nature conservation or bio-diversity interest. Any future review of the Green Belt should seek to improve bio-diversity and provide positive recreational and leisure benefits to the population of the City and its necklace villages in a sustainable way. The provision of such benefits in the Green Belt would not justify a loss of existing open space or playing fields within Cambridge (see *Cambridge - An Estimate of Urban Capacity*, paragraph 5.23).

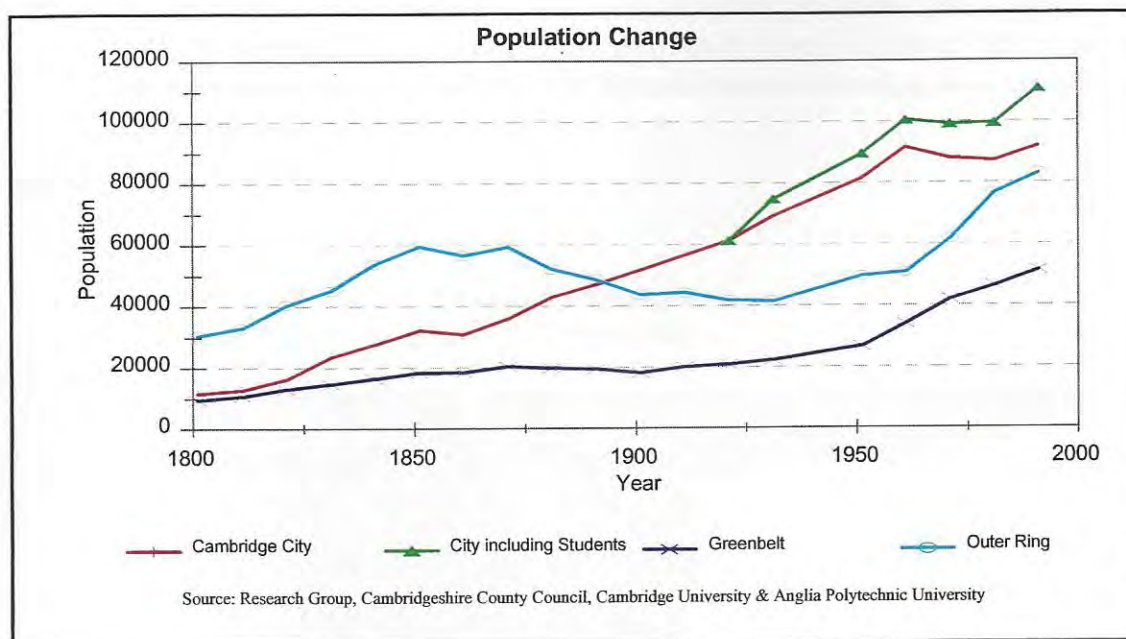
4.0 Impacts of the Green Belt

- 4.1 This section examines a series of economic, social and environmental indicators which demonstrate the wider impact of the Green Belt upon the City. In summary, by restricting the supply of land for development it has set in motion or intensified trends that are detrimental to the future of the City and the wider Sub-region. It has had a role in creating high house prices and long distance commuting which have led to congestion and pollution. Many people who work in the City are forced to live in less sustainable locations. Taken together the indicators support a reconsideration of long established planning policy for the Sub-Region.

Population Change

- 4.2 The steady growth of Cambridge continued until 1961, when the concept and implementation of Green Belt policy began to restrict the growth of the City. Simultaneously, and in accordance with the agreed planning framework for the Cambridge Sub-Region, the populations of the Green Belt and outer-ring settlements began to grow at a more rapid rate than previously seen. In the period 1961-1991, Cambridge experienced a population growth of just 0.5% (excluding students). This is in stark contrast to the outer-ring settlements with growth of 63%, and the Green Belt settlements with growth of 51%. Fig.9 (overleaf) illustrates these trends.
- 4.3 Whilst nationally urban areas have lost population to more rural areas, the presence of the Green Belt appears to have greatly intensified such trends in the Cambridge sub-region.
- 4.4 The Green Belt has been successful in terms of limiting the population of the City to a relatively stable level. However in the period since the conception and implementation of the Green Belt, Cambridge has undergone major changes in terms of its functional importance, as described in Section 1 of this report.
- 4.5 The Green Belt has limited the supply of land, and thus the potential for housing development close to the urban centre. However the dynamic growth in employment has proved difficult to control, resulting in population growth at an increasing distance from the City. This has led to a loss of greenfield land beyond the Green Belt, creating patterns of development and commuting contrary to the principles of sustainable development. These effects are expanded in greater detail in the following pages.

Fig 9



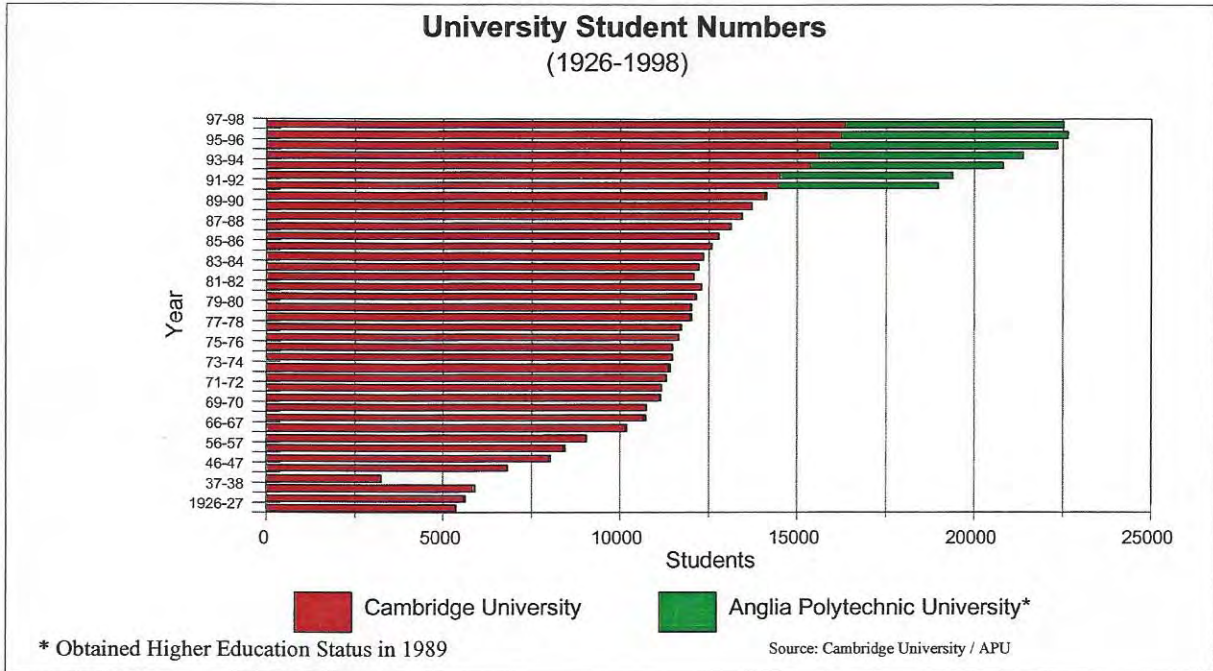
Definition of terms 'outer-ring' : those parishes which lie beyond the present day Green Belt, comprising remainder South Cambridgeshire and parishes in the southern area of East Cambridgeshire.
 'Greenbelt' : population within those parishes (or majority part of parishes) which now form part of the present day Green Belt

Student Numbers

- 4.6 The second half of the century has seen a major increase in student numbers, whilst the University of Cambridge has gone from being an institution of regional and national importance to one which is considered a world leader. In the period 1956/57 to 1997/98 the University of Cambridge experienced an increase in student numbers of 95%.
- 4.7 The national expansion of the higher education sector in the late 1980s and early 1990s, resulted in a significant increase in students attending Anglia Polytechnic University (APU). Since 1991/2 there has been a rapid growth in student numbers at APU of 37%.
- 4.8 The growth of APU reflects its wider role. The last twenty years has seen it move from performing essentially a technical college role, to being a university in its own right. Combining the totals of students at both institutions since 1956/57, the development of the two institutions has resulted in an overall growth in student numbers in the City of 168%. Students now account for approximately 20% of the total population of the City, a major increase from 1951 when students accounted for only 9.8%.
- 4.9 The presence of the institutions and the students themselves exert great pressure on

Cambridge in a number of areas. The private rented housing sector is under considerable and increasing pressure from students competing for accommodation with local residents. New faculties, student facilities, research institutes and above all purpose built student hostels are all competing with other development sectors for a limited supply of land. The high densities of new purpose built hostel accommodation can only be accommodated in certain parts of the City and impose a growing strain on local services and facilities.

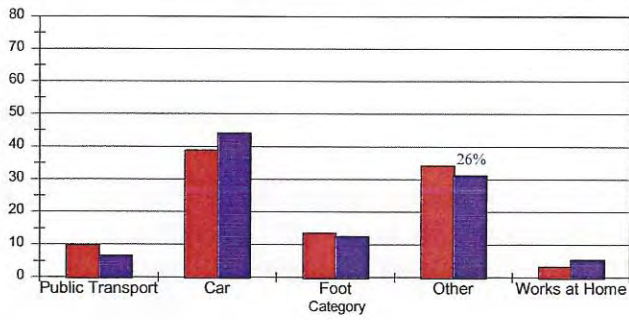
Fig. 10



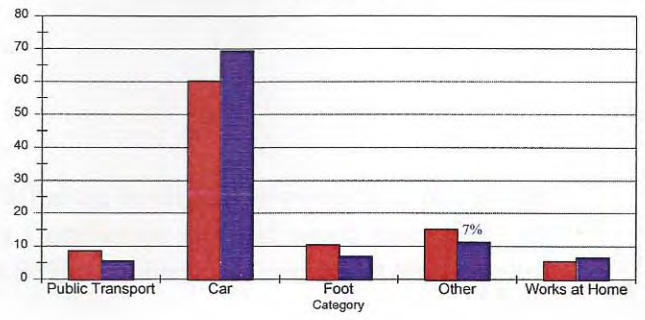
Transport and Sustainability

- 4.10 The modal transport split within Cambridge is unique within the Eastern region given the particularly high incidence of cycling as a mode of transport, accounting for 26% of journeys to work. This is coupled with comparatively low levels of car usage for such journeys. The well developed cycling infrastructure and the compact nature of the City's built form play a significant role in promoting cycling as a viable and popular transport mode. Fig.11 (overleaf) illustrates the mode of transport used for journeys to work in Cambridgeshire and East Anglia.
- 4.11 Whilst those resident in Cambridge may have alternatives to car usage, those resident in surrounding districts who travel to work within Cambridge are often unable, or choose not to use transport modes other than the car for such journeys. Residents in these districts have a far greater reliance upon the car for journeys to work, with significantly higher levels of car usage than Cambridge residents. This is due to increasing distances and the inadequate public transport network.
- 4.12 It can be inferred from this that those who live within and immediately adjacent to Cambridge are able to make choices and decisions that will result in more sustainable lifestyles, choices that appear more limited to those who, as result of restricted land supply and high house prices, live at greater distances from Cambridge.
- 4.13 If the positive virtues of Cambridge as a 'sustainable city', in terms of access to services, jobs and a strong modal split could be retained in any City expansion proposals, it would follow that such a development is likely to be more sustainable than housing development in locations away from the City.

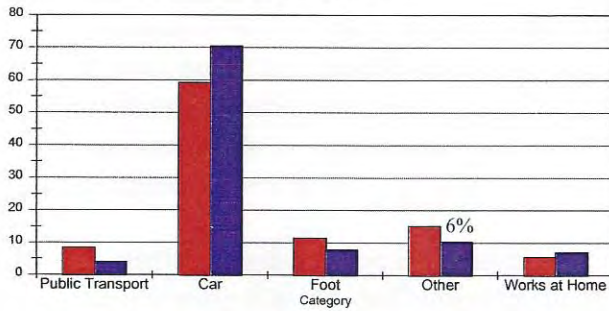
Cambridge



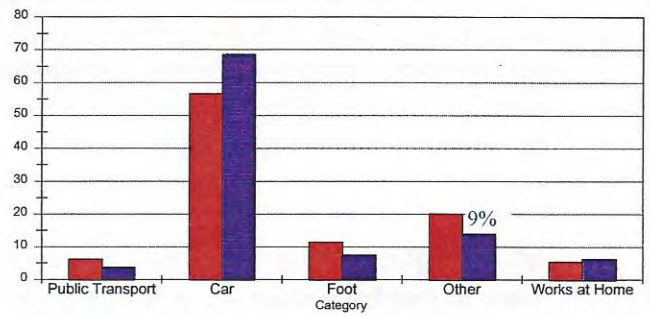
South Cams



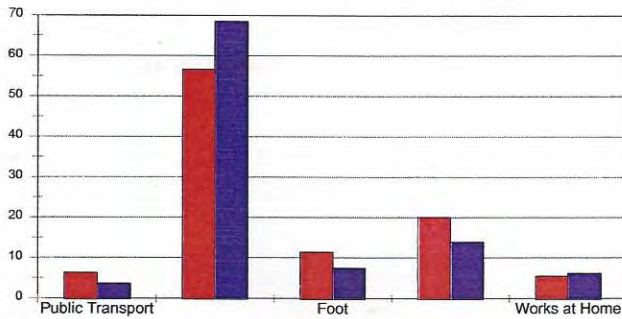
East Cams



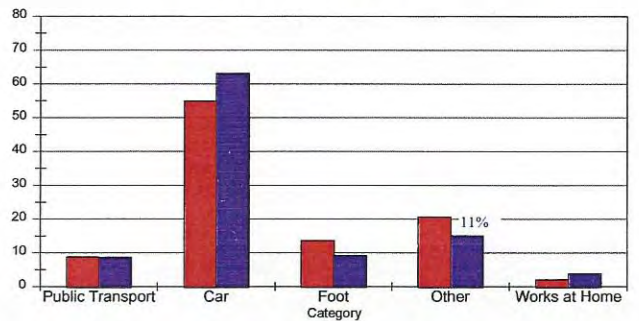
Fenland



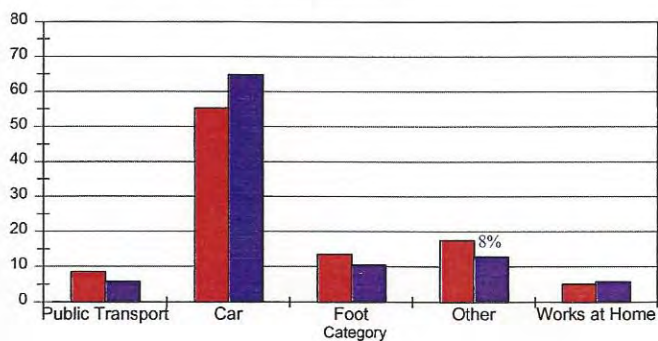
Fenland



Peterborough



East Anglia



1981

1991

Car Ownership Levels

- 4.14 A further indicator of sustainability are the differing levels of car ownership across the Sub-Region. The level of car ownership in Cambridge has increased from 51% of households owning at least one car in 1971, to 64% of households owning at least one car in 1991.
- 4.15 Car ownership per household is much higher in the districts surrounding Cambridge, for example 85% in South Cambridgeshire, 81% in Huntingdonshire and 80% in East Cambridgeshire. As with other cities and conurbations, Cambridge experiences lower car ownership than more rural areas. There is no reason to believe that this is due to lower income levels in Cambridge than elsewhere. On the contrary, it is primarily due to the compact nature of the City which promotes walking and cycling.
- 4.16 A further consideration is the increase in multiple car ownership in Cambridge and the surrounding districts. In Cambridge in 1971 only 8% of households owned two or more cars, rising to 12% in 1981 and 17% in 1991. Whilst this is a significant increase, multiple car ownership in the areas surrounding the City is much greater, for example, 40% in South Cambridgeshire, 36% in Huntingdonshire, and 35% in East Cambridgeshire. Fig.12 illustrates the change in car ownership levels between 1981-1991.

Fig.12

Car Ownership Households, 1991

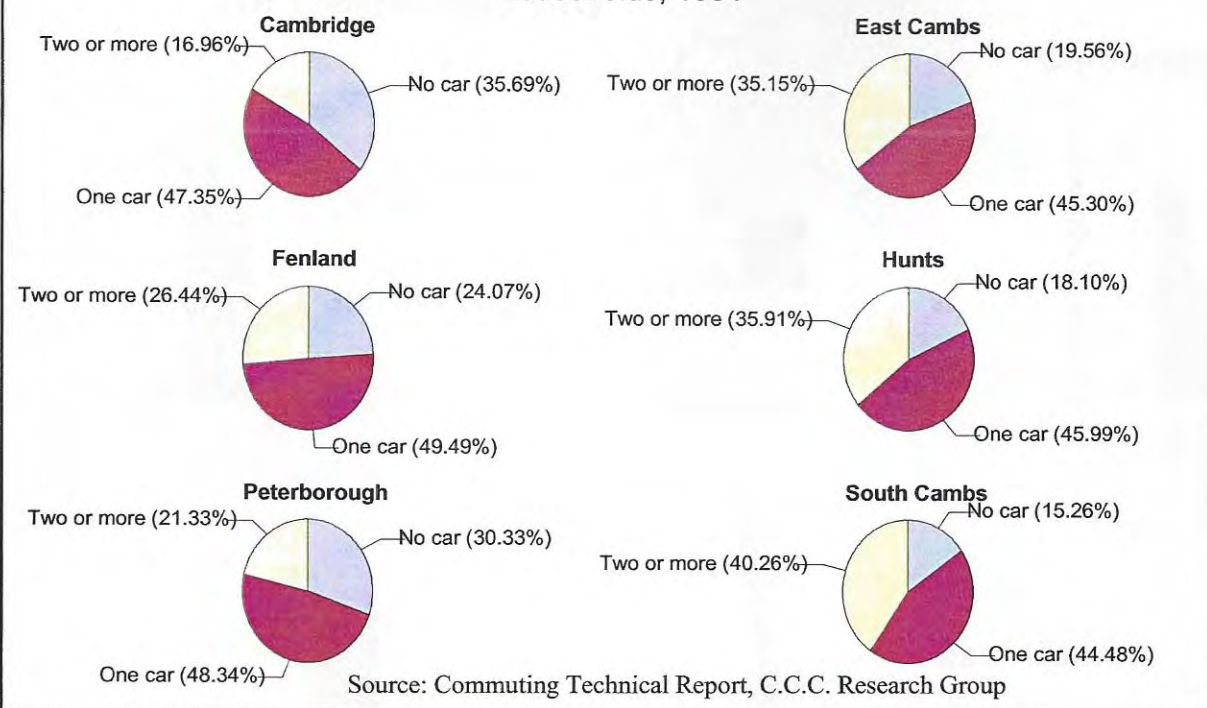


Fig 12 cont/..

Car Ownership Households, 1981

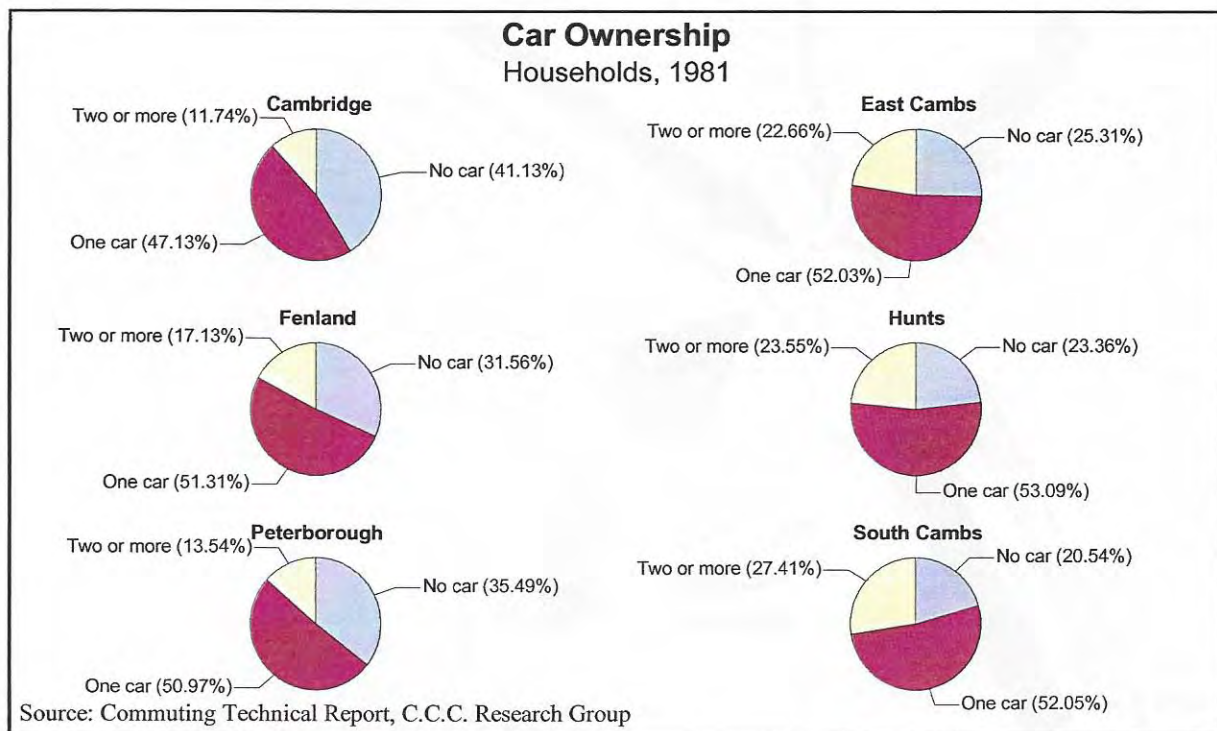
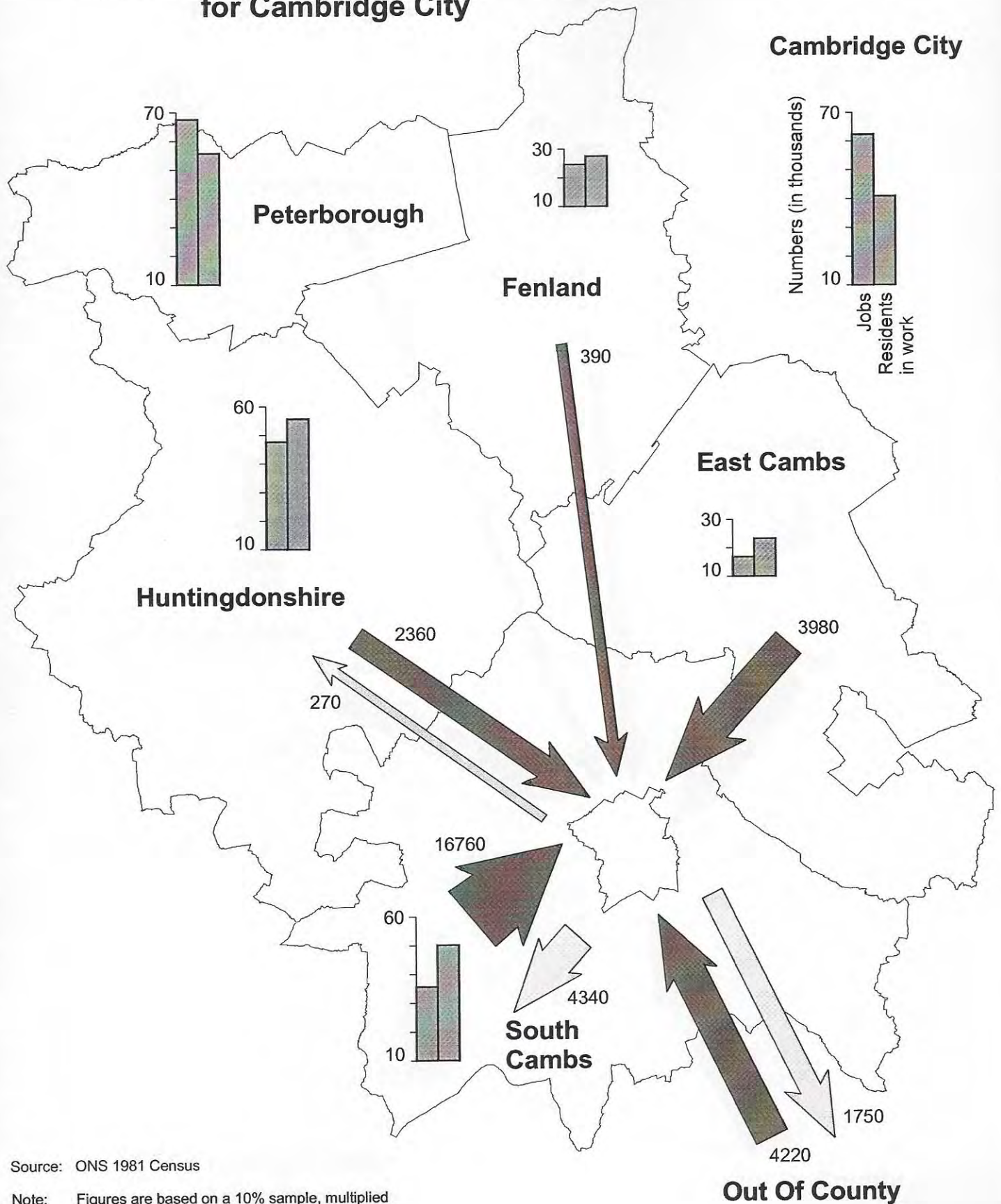


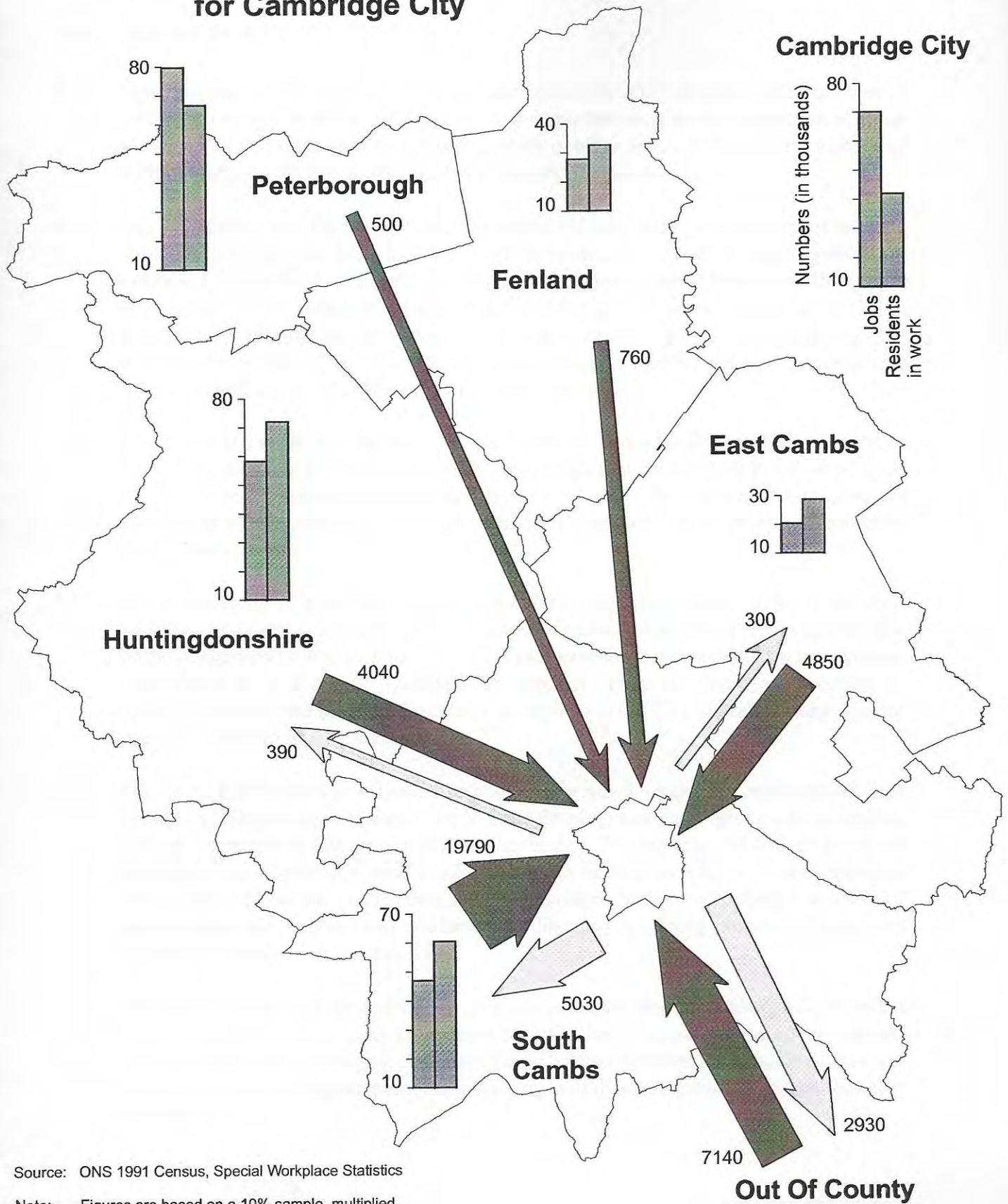
Fig.13 1981 Journey to Work Flows for Cambridge City



Source: ONS 1981 Census

Note: Figures are based on a 10% sample, multiplied by a factor of 10. Residents with workplace not fixed, not stated or armed forces are assumed to work within zone of residence. Flows of under 250 persons have been omitted.

Fig.14 1991 Journey to Work Flows for Cambridge City



Source: ONS 1991 Census, Special Workplace Statistics

Note: Figures are based on a 10% sample, multiplied by a factor of 10. Residents with workplace not fixed, not stated or armed forces are assumed to work within zone of residence. Flows of under 250 persons have been omitted.

4.17 The significance of these statistics is drawn out in the in following paragraphs.

Commuting Patterns

4.18 Fig.14 illustrates the number of jobs in each Cambridgeshire district and the number of residents in work as at the 1991 census. It is important to note the proportion of those resident in a particular area who travel to work in other areas, as this creates a series of commuting patterns that impact upon the centres of employment.

4.19 Fig.13 indicates that Cambridge City experiences a significant in-migration of workers from surrounding districts. 33% of workers resident in South Cambridgeshire are employed within the City, equating to 19,790 employees. Similar flows arise from other surrounding areas, noted in the fact that Cambridge City has a total of only 41,860 residents in work, but accommodates 70,160 jobs. In 1981, 44.7% of employees in the City lived elsewhere (Fig.13), with this figure rising to 52.9% in 1991. This contrasts with the situation in 1961 when the figure was just 20%.¹⁴

4.20 Combined, the areas of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire account for 39% of jobs within the County¹⁵. A large number of journeys to work are therefore centred upon the Cambridge Sub-Region and particularly the City itself. The impacts of such flows are determined by other factors such as car ownership levels and the mode of transport used for journeys to work.

4.21 The combination of large flows of employees to the City, the reliance of the car for such journeys, and high ownership levels, results in Cambridge suffering from considerable traffic congestion problems, noise, pollution and accidents between vehicles and cyclists, particularly at peak times. The fact that large numbers of employees working in Cambridge live some distance from their workplace in the City is undoubtedly a major causative element of such problems.

4.22 The Green Belt has served to reduce the potential for development in many areas adjacent to the City. Restricting land supply for housing development has played a role in creating the high house prices that are common in Cambridge. The expense and lack of supply of housing in the Cambridge area results in a large number of middle income families having little option but to live away from Cambridge, further away from their point of employment, and from services and leisure facilities, so increasing journey distances and decreasing transport mode options.

4.23 The impact is commuting patterns that give rise to severe congestion along all City radial routes extending back to many of the surrounding villages. As a result the environmental amenity of the city is damaged. Seeking a better balance between the location of jobs and homes is of critical importance when seeking sustainable locations for new housing development.

Effect on Major Employers

4.24 The table below notes a number of major employers in Cambridge and the resident location of their employees.

Fig.15 Location of Staff Home Address Post Codes for Major Employers in the Cambridge Area

Employer	Number of employees for which information is available	Distance from place of work					
		Up to 5km	6-10km	11-15km	16-20km	21-25km	more than 25km
Cambs. County Council	1251	295 (24%)	151 (12%)	76 (6%)	167 (13%)	130 (10%)	432 (35%)
Science Park	1522	538 (35%)	175 (11%)	219 (14%)	210 (14%)	91 (7%)	289 (19%)
Marshall	2200	573 (26%)	224 (10%)	238 (11%)	285 (13%)	176 (8%)	704 (32%)
Addenbrookes	5288	1905 (36%)	955 (18%)	509 (10%)	460 (9%)	464 (9%)	955 (18%)

source : Cambridgeshire County Council, April-October 1998
Total employees on Science Park 4,500

4.25 Approximately, only one quarter of County Council and Marshalls employees live within 5km of their place of employment. In comparison this catchment contains a high proportion of Science Park workers: 35%. Of further significance are the two thirds of Science Park workers who live within 15km of their place of employment compared to approximately one quarter of Marshalls and County Council employees. Moreover, 45% and 40% of County Council and Marshalls employees respectively live further than 21km away, compared to only 26% for employees based at the Science Park.

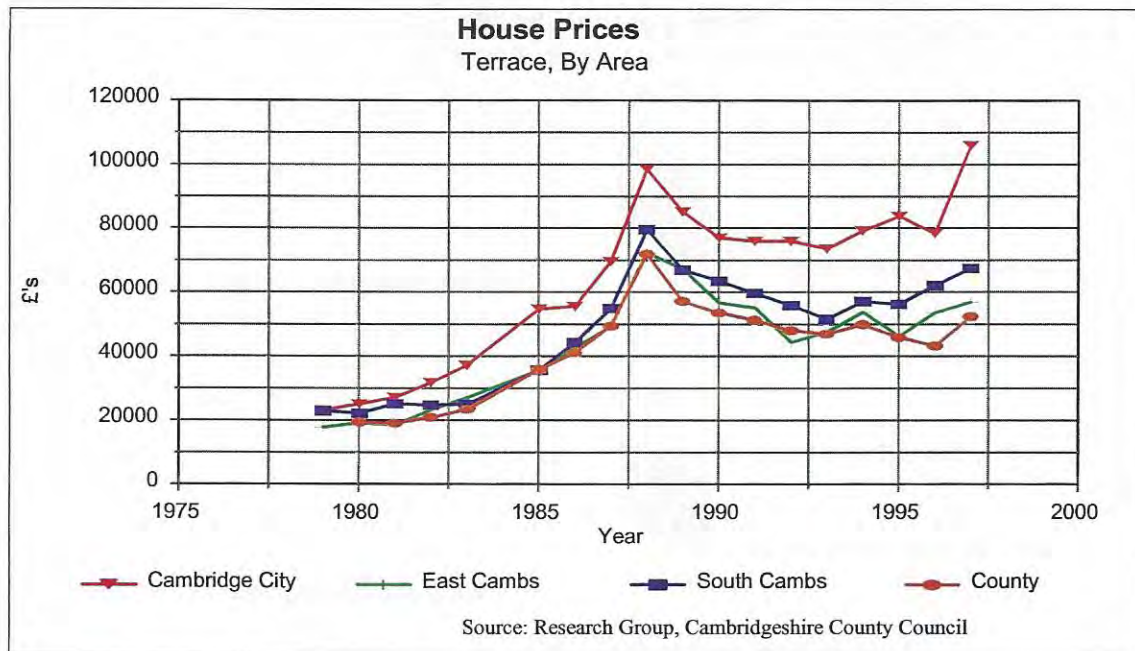
4.26 This table illustrates the fairly high proportions of workers that commute long distances to work. We can make the assumption that a factor in these trends is the affordability and price of housing in the Cambridge area. Fig 16 illustrates the significant price differential between terraced housing in the City and the surrounding districts.

4.27 Whilst Cambridge has a relatively high proportion of high income earners, there must also be an appreciation of the high proportion of people on relatively low full-time pay for whom high house prices make living near to their place of work more difficult.¹⁶

House Prices

- 4.28 Terraced housing is the most common dwelling type in the City, accounting for approximately 48% of dwelling stock advertised in December 1997¹⁷. This dwelling type offers the most affordable option for house purchase within the City. The inherent quality of the environment and the character of the City makes Cambridge an attractive place in which to live and thus a high demand for housing exists. This attractiveness is coupled with a critical shortage of land for development, particularly for housing development resulting in higher house prices than properties of a similar type in neighbouring districts and the county as a whole. The Green Belt has severely restricted the availability of land for housing development within the City boundary and as such, high house prices can be attributed in part to its existence. Fig.16 shows the price of terraced housing in neighbouring districts.
- 4.29 The affordability of housing in Cambridge is a major concern, not just to ensure that quality housing can be provided for all citizens. Many households who play an active role in the economy and life of the City have little option but to live at a distance because of affordability issues. Even for those with a choice, the price differential is an incentive to look elsewhere for housing. As the average gross household income in Cambridge in 1997 (excluding all benefits) was £16,405¹⁸, it is clear that for households with no capital, the purchase of even a modest terraced dwelling is normally impossible. The 1998 Cambridge Housing Need Survey revealed that the gross annual income of owner occupiers with a mortgage was significantly higher at £26,492, and that 65.7% of existing households in Cambridge could afford to buy or rent a property in the area if they needed to move to a different home.
- 4.30 The proportion of dwellings sold in particular price bands further highlights the issue of affordability. In the second quarter of 1998, only 16% of properties in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire were sold for below £60,000, 63% of which were flats / maisonettes. This compares to 36% of properties in East Cambridgeshire sold for under £60,000, 45% in Huntingdonshire, and 75% in Fenland¹⁹.
- 4.31 The particularly high prices in and adjacent to the City, place a great strain on the local housing market, especially for first time buyers and those on relatively low incomes. In addition many middle income households are simply becoming squeezed out of the house market in the City. The price differential between the City and the surrounding areas is becoming increasingly wider.

Fig.16



Housing Need in the Cambridge Area

Cambridge City

4.32 Approximately 685 additional households require affordable housing each year. The capacity of the social housing sector in the City equates to the housing of approximately 860 households per year²⁰. Whilst the provision of affordable housing is currently exceeding demand, a 20 year backlog of unmet need exists. By 2006 this backlog will still be over 3400 households assuming no further negative change in the supply/demand ratio²¹.

South Cambridgeshire

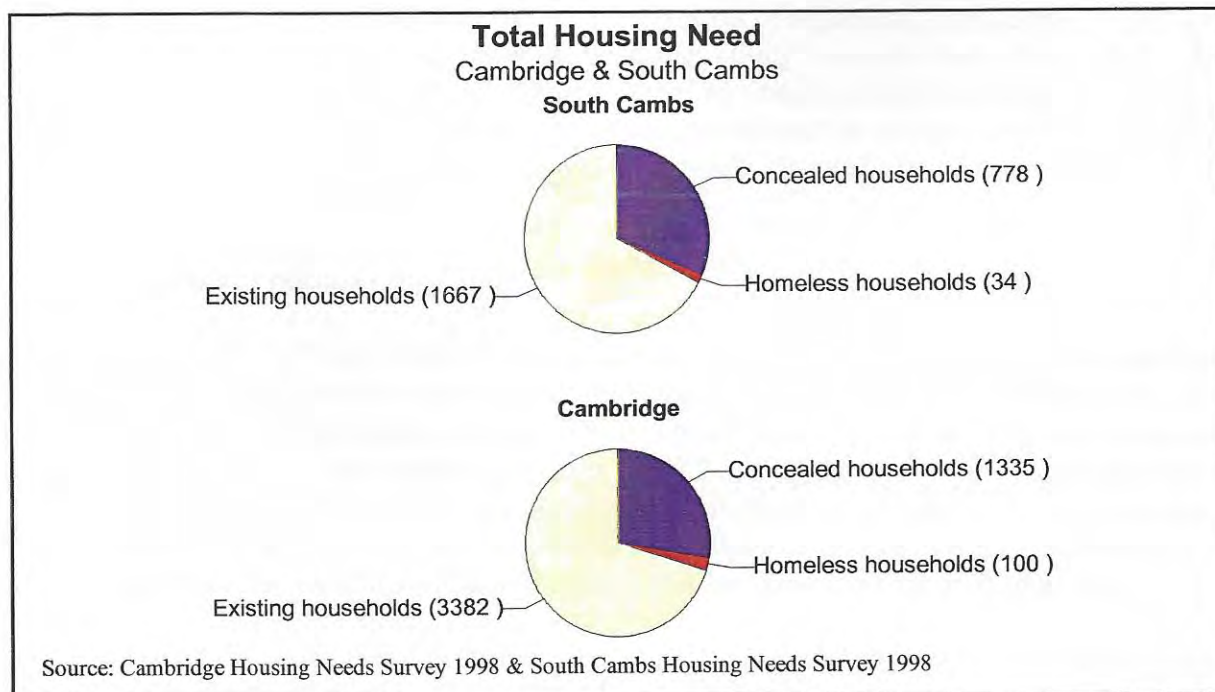
4.33 Approximately 1150 new households fall into housing need each year, with a supply of dwellings from new lettings and transfers equating to an average of 550 dwellings per year. Therefore an estimated average of 600 households a year will fall into housing need and cannot be housed from the available supply of affordable housing²².

3.34 Therefore to 2006, including the need from current households, the council will face affordable housing needs arising from a total of 7,279 households (2479 households currently in need with an additional 600 per year).

3.35 In summary the total affordable housing needs for the Cambridge area to 2006 is for approximately 10,679 households.

*Note: As each housing needs survey used a different basis of calculation, these figures must be treated with care. Nevertheless they do reveal a major affordable housing problem in the Cambridge Sub-Region with around 10,000 households in need of affordable housing.

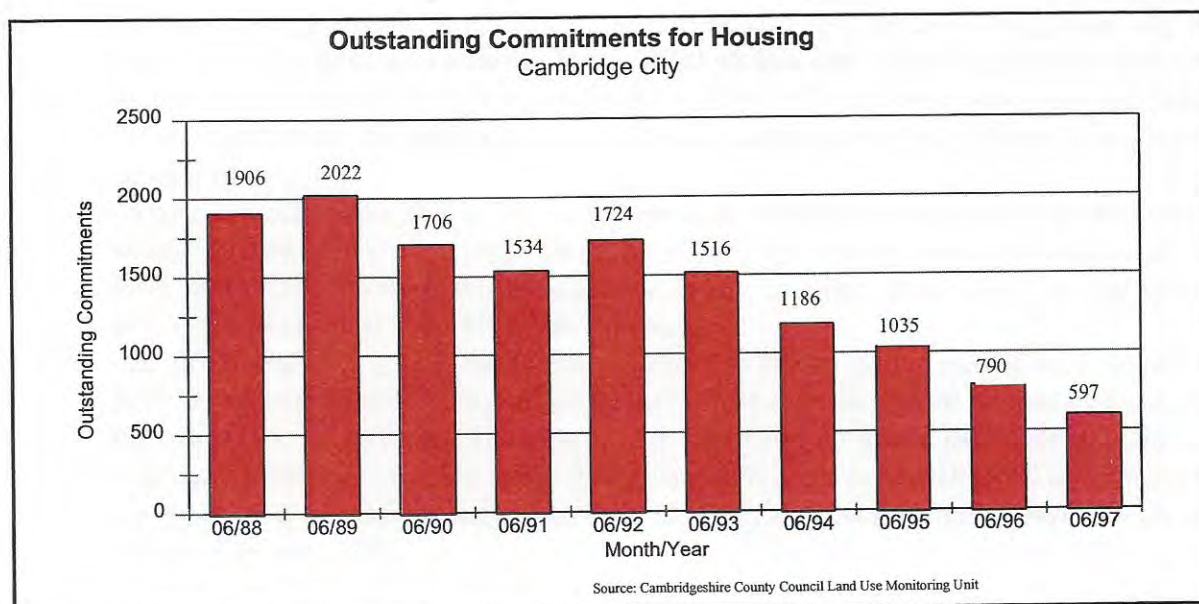
Fig.17



Outstanding Commitments for Housing Development

4.36 Fig.18 indicates a marked fall in the level of outstanding planning permissions for housing development since the late 1980s-early 1990s. It demonstrates that residential permissions are being developed without delay, indicating healthy economic conditions and a high demand for housing within the City. Cambridge has significantly fewer outstanding planning permissions than any other district in Cambridgeshire ²³.

Fig 18



5.0 Towards a New Cambridge Green Belt

- 5.1 This section draws together the separate strands of argument. In summary, it reviews recent developments in national planning policy towards both Green Belts and sustainable development. It identifies areas of search arising from the environmental analysis where it may be possible to locate development in the form of urban extensions around the City or along public transport corridors. It concludes that a full review of the Green Belt is necessary.

National Pressures for Change

- 5.2 The current national debate is primarily concerned with whether Green Belt boundaries and concepts remain sustainable in the light of household formation projections. Any review of the Cambridge Green Belt must reflect this debate and the changes to national planning policy that are arising from it. PPG 2 (1995) remains the most comprehensive statement of national policy concerning Green Belts. It states that Green Belt boundaries should be altered only in exceptional circumstances and only after consideration of development capacity within the contained urban area and beyond it (para 2.6).
- 5.3 The City Council believes that exceptional circumstances do now exist which require a review of the Cambridge Green Belt. First because there is limited development capacity remaining in the City. Secondly because increasing emphasis is being given to concepts of sustainable development in all aspects of planning, including the designation and review of Green Belts (the existing Green Belt long predates this requirement and has not been subject to any such review (para 2.10 and 2.14); and finally because the current Green Belt boundary is so tight that there can be no local confidence of its future permanence, which devalues the concept of Green Belts and reduces the value of local plans in making proper provision for necessary future development (para 2.8).
- 5.4 In 1997 the new Government started to consider how best to balance the need for houses with protection of the countryside. The Parliamentary Select Committee for the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs considered that an investigation into the issues raised by this was a priority. They published their report into *Planning for Housing* in mid-1998. It offers strong support for the concept of Green Belts and states that Green Belts which protect the setting of historic towns must be preserved. However, it goes on to state that:
'Where the alternative may be the development in villages beyond the Green Belt which would encourage commuting, there may in very exceptional circumstances be justification for building homes adjacent to the existing urban area on the Green Belt'(para 264). The Committee also agreed that:
'the great majority of the one to two million new homes on greenfield sites should be built as extensions to existing urban areas, where advantage can be taken of existing infrastructure or services, including public transport, or where new development can improve such services. This is the option which is most consistent with an integrated transport policy, with reducing the need to travel and with reducing reliance on the private car'(para 259).
- 5.5 That this is not just a theoretical issue for Cambridge is shown by recent instances of land release from the Green Belt. In January 1998, the Government did not object to the release of Green Belt land to the west of Stevenage and near to Hemel Hempstead to

accommodate 4,600 homes. Considering the Newcastle UDP, the Government decided not to call in the plan despite its planned release of 480 hectares of Green Belt land to provide for 2,500 homes and employment development. The Cheshire Structure Plan, Examination in Public report calls for a review of Green Belt boundaries to ensure that development needs can be accommodated. These examples indicate a growing national pressure on Green Belts arising from household formation projections and concerns about how best to provide for sustainable patterns of development.

- 5.6 The main Government response to the issue of planning for housing is contained within *Planning for the Communities of the Future*. It sets out a new approach to regional planning. On pages 18-23 it details the Government's preferred approach to accommodating the forecast 4.4 million new homes. The main elements of which include a sequential approach, with new housing to be built in the most sustainable locations such as on previously developed land in urban areas, or at the edge of existing urban areas on public transport corridors where they are most accessible to public transport, jobs and services.
- 5.7 It also previews future action by Government. A new PPG 3 will take a comprehensive look at the options for accommodating household growth in the context of an integrated transport strategy and sustainable patterns of development. Regarding Green Belts it states that Government remains strongly committed to them as a way of protecting the countryside. However it also states in paragraph 70 that in exceptional cases indifferent land can be released from the Green Belt if this would result in the protection of better quality land elsewhere.
- 5.8 In October 1998 the Government published its response to the Select Committee report *Planning for Housing*. Regarding Green Belts it notes a potential inconsistency between the Committee's strong support for Green Belts and its recommendation that the great majority of new greenfield housing should be built as extensions to urban areas. The response states that there may be circumstances where Green Belt land may offer the most sustainable location for such urban extensions and that there may be exceptional cases where Green Belt boundaries may need to be adjusted (para 94). It also agrees with the Select Committee about the importance of Green Belts designed to protect the setting of historic towns.
- 5.9 Further guidance from Government has come in *Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice*, which provides detailed advice on how the principles of sustainable development can be incorporated into development plans. In respect of Green Belts it repeats the advice given in PPG2, going on to state:
'Where faced with a requirement for new development, and in assessing alternative locations for it, substantial weight should be attached to any harm to the Green Belt ... There may be exceptional cases, though, where releasing Green Belt land would offer a more sustainable solution than greenfield development elsewhere'. It goes on to require a thorough justification for such a change, not least to ensure that the wider purposes of the Green Belt are not undermined (para 3.2.8 and 9). It lists the benefits of expanding existing settlements as:
'Some services will already exist, making life easier for new residents; new services will have ready-made customers and existing facilities can be more fully utilised; and the new community will be built around some sense of history and local culture' (para 3.3.14).

The Green Belt and Sustainable Development

- 5.10 In *Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice* the DETR suggests that sustainable patterns of development can arise from following a sequential approach. The first sequential level of search relates to development within the existing urban area which is the subject of the report: *Cambridge: An estimate of Urban Capacity*.
- 5.11 The urban extension is the second sequential level of search. Urban extensions can contribute to creating more sustainable development by 'stitching in' to existing neighbourhoods and communities both in terms of transport links, and for employment and services, so they become part of the functioning of the urban network. Benefits can accrue from urban extensions by enhancing city edges, protecting green corridors and establishing opportunities for non vehicular transport. The areas of search for possible urban extensions around Cambridge are indicated in Fig.18. Although these areas are currently within the Green Belt, with sensitive design their development would not be harmful to the character or setting of Cambridge. This is because there is no loss of land or features forming part of the defining characteristics of the City and its setting.
- 5.12 It is highly unlikely that all the areas of search identified at the second level will be viable as development sites, whether due to ownership and current land use, social, transport, or other environmental factors. Furthermore, such a 'pepperpot' scattering of development around the edges of the City may not be the best approach. Further work on the detailed evaluation and definition of these sites will need to be carried out through the review of Structure and Local Plans.
- 5.13 In *Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice*, paragraph 3.1.3 states that 'urban extensions should have:
- (a) *A positive relation to an existing city by helping complete a neighbourhood area;*
 - (b) *a variety of housing types, tenure and densities as well as neighbourhood centres with mixed uses and a range of facilities;*
 - (c) *a landscape structure incorporating and building on existing assets; and creating a distinct edge to the urban area;*
 - (d) *pedestrian, cycle and public transport networks, fully integrated with existing or potential provision in adjacent urban areas, and enabling appropriate access to the adjacent rural area;*
 - (e) *the ability to exploit existing infrastructure eg water and electricity, and to maximise the use of that infrastructure; and*
 - (f) *a strong local identity reflecting local characteristics and based on coherent and distinctive urban design, and expressed in the design individual buildings'.*

These indicators can be used as a methodology to assess the suitability of the areas of search for development.

- 5.14 The report goes on to state (para 3.2.19) that urban extensions can provide particular opportunities. They can:
- (a) *Provide specific improvements to the setting of an existing urban area;*
 - (b) *provide for improved public transport (including bus connections) within the existing urban area, or between two existing towns, by increasing viability of services;*

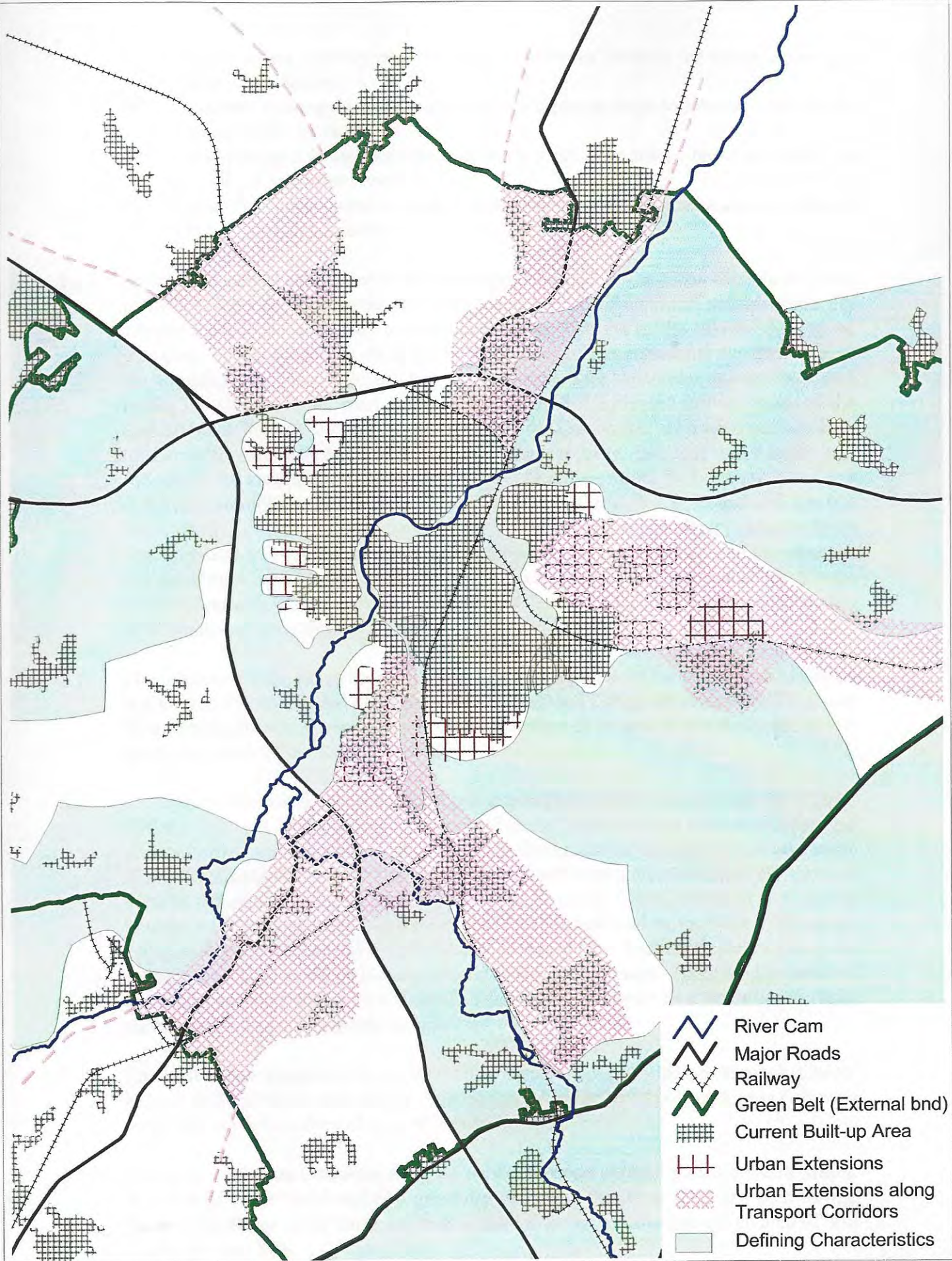
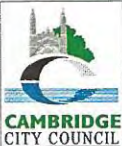


Fig. 19

Defining Characteristics and Areas of Search for Urban Extensions



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Date: 26/11/98
 Drawn By: Tim Cliff
 Section / Department: Policy Group, Planning
 Scale: 1:100,000



- (c) *utilise spare capacity that may exist in terms of services (eg water, sewerage, education, health);*
- (d) *augment existing facilities and services in adjacent neighbourhoods where there are deficiencies in provision;*
- (e) *use damaged landscape and previously used sites, where these are viable in financial and other terms; and*
- (f) *provide wildlife corridors and recreational routes between open countryside and the existing urban areas'.*

- 5.15 As a full or partial alternative to the pepperpot approach larger urban extensions along public transport corridors could contribute to sustainable development and are especially effective where a number of alternative transport options to the private car can be provided. Urban extensions along public transport corridors represents the third level in the sequential test. Four such corridors can be identified for Cambridge and are illustrated in Fig.19. To the north west, following the line of the disused railway track of the Cambridge to St. Ives line; to the east following the Cambridge to Ipswich railway line; to the south following the Cambridge to London railway line; and to the north east following the Cambridge to Ely railway line. These corridors focus on rail lines, but make no assumptions about modal split between rail and bus. It can be assumed that bus based corridors may be equally appropriate. The urban extensions along public transport corridors shown in Fig 18, do not represent proposals for continuously built up areas. In respect of each corridor they represent areas of search for development, that would take place in limited areas, at various points along its extent. The corridors can be regarded as alternatives rather than as a package solution.
- 5.16 The urban extension along the north west public transport corridor runs between Histon and Girton, Cottenham and Oakington, Willingham and Longstonton and then Over and Swavesey to St Ives. It runs along the south boundary of an area of best landscape which lies to the south of the River Great Ouse.
- 5.17 The urban extension along the southern public transport corridor runs through the villages of Great Shelford, Whittlesford, Duxford and Great Chesterford to Saffron Walden and generally through a large tract of countryside designated as an area of best landscape (South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 1993). A western extension to this line runs through Foxton, Shepreth, Meldreth and Melbourn to Royston. This extension lies on the boundary of areas of best landscape around Haslingfield and to the west of Royston. From purely environmental considerations, it would seem that development along the western extension would be less detrimental to the environment. There tend to be more villages in the south sector, so it is possible that coalescence may be a factor which could curtail development along this corridor.
- 5.18 The east urban extension along the public transport corridor passes through Cherry Hinton and Fulbourn and then to Newmarket. A short length of track near Fulbourn forms the north boundary of area of best landscape.
- 5.19 The north east urban extension along the public transport corridor passes close to Milton and then to Waterbeach and Ely, generally following the River Cam and then further north to the River Great Ouse. A short length of the route runs through an area of best landscape near Milton Country Park.

- 5.20 Settlements along public transport corridors should either be extensions to existing communities, or new settlements (*Planning for Sustainable Development :Towards Better Practice* para 3.1.3).

Conclusions

- 5.21 This report has concentrated on the setting and environment of the City, the pressures acting on it, and whether there is any potential for growth without detriment to national and local Green Belt policy. It indicates that it should be possible to enlarge Cambridge without material detriment to its setting as an historic city, or to its defining characteristics.
- 5.22 Such a controversial proposal would not be being considered if it were not for the exceptional circumstances affecting Cambridge and its Sub-Region. National policy towards sustainable development indicates that urban extensions are more sustainable than dispersed patterns of development. This is reinforced in the case of Cambridge by its dominant role in the Sub Region in relation to jobs. Sustainability issues and selecting the most sustainable development option for the Cambridge Sub Region are central to the analysis of options being prepared for the Examination in Public, some of which include development in what is now Green Belt land around Cambridge. This report shows that development is possible, but does not provide the detailed analysis needed to say how much development can be accommodated and where that development could be located except in broad terms. Whether any particular urban extension can be said to be 'sustainable' will depend upon detailed testing, relating its extent and location to existing employment and service locations and on how well it can be integrated into a public transport network. These are questions for Structure and Local Plans and not for Regional Planning Guidance.
- 5.23 However in order to be able to assess the merits of development options in the Cambridge Sub-Region at Structure Plan stage it is essential that a full review of the Green Belt is carried out taking into account both its role in protecting the setting of a historic town and also its implications for sustainable development. This accords with the recommendations of the Cambridgeshire Local Authorities Joint Position Statement and should be one of the key recommendations of the Examination In Public Panel report and of Regional Planning Guidance itself.
- 5.24 Cambridge is not alone in confronting these issues. There is a growing tension between Green Belt and sustainable development policy. The former is long established and cherished, the other new and still maturing. Nevertheless it is of growing importance nationally as it looks at issues in the round and forms an important part of national efforts to confront such issues as global warming and the use of energy. It is therefore a planning tool for the 21st century, rather than one of the early 20th like Green Belt policy. As the sustainability implications of new Green Belt proposals must be considered before they can be introduced, it would be illogical not to apply a similar test to established Green Belts when they are central to important planning issues. This is in effect the position adopted by Government in *Planning for The Communities of The Future*, and in *Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice*. Both provide for Green Belt development in exceptional circumstances, where it is more sustainable than development beyond it. Green Belts will remain valued, and an effective planning tool, but not to the extent of outweighing all other policy considerations.

5.25 Cambridge has not stopped changing and growing despite the Green Belt. If current trends continue there is a danger that they will result in an increasingly dysfunctional City. Achieving the City Council's vision for Cambridge will become more difficult. In contrast, a carefully planned enlargement of the City could generate affordable housing including private sector housing, add to the distinctive communities of the City, assist the growth of its high-tech business clusters, help to make public transport more viable, encourage pedestrian and cycle usage, enable more people to live closer to work, shops and services, protect the historic core and the setting of the City and enable it to reinforce its dynamic role in regional and national affairs.

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